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The Coming Plutonium Nightmare

A Whiff of Fascism on the New Right, by Peter Steinfels

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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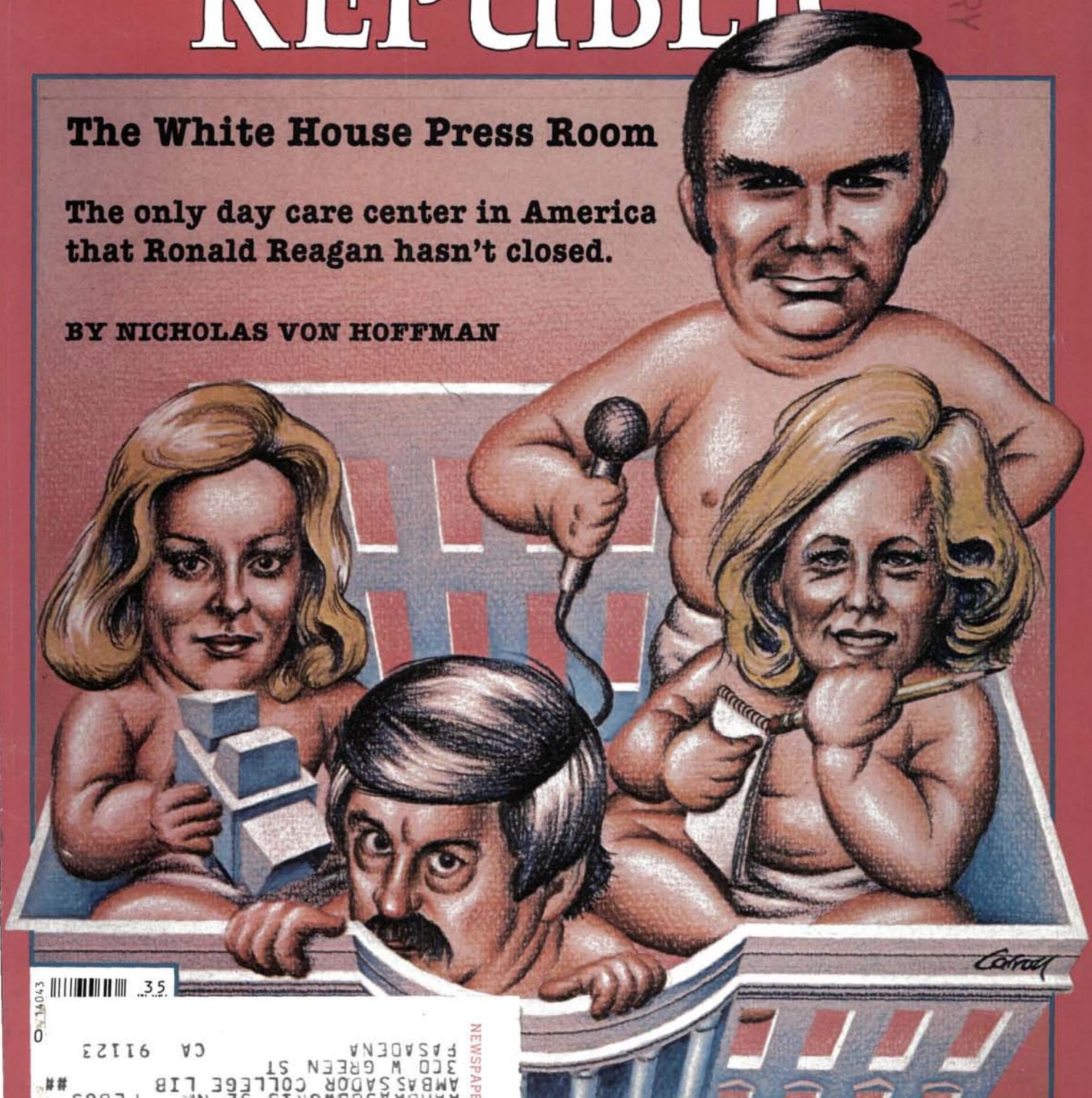
BY NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN



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NEWSPAPER

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE PLO PROBLEM

To the editors:

Michael Walzer's "Peace or the PLO," (TNR, August 16 & 23) has much in it that is sound, but there are two problems with his argument.

One concerns what I would have thought to be obvious: this Israeli government doesn't have the slightest intention of granting real autonomy to the Arabs on the West Bank and dealing with their elected representatives. The elimination of the PLO is only part of a strategy that clearly aims at replacing authentic Palestinians with hand-picked Quislings. It isn't as if Begin and Sharon had decided to destroy the PLO so as to get rid of an external impediment to the dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians on the West Bank; it is all forms of Palestinian nationalism, irredentist or pragmatic, that are to be wiped out. If a genuine dialogue had been undertaken after Camp David, with a promise of self-determination, the West Bank mayors would most probably have dragged much of the external PLO along with them. But Professor Walzer knows as well as I do that Begin's plan is a kind of Bantustan, not self-determination. If the Palestinians of the occupied territories still were to "represent an alternative politics," the prerequisite would be a complete reversal of Begin's policy. If that is what is needed, why doesn't he say so more clearly, instead of asking for "magnanimity"? And does he not believe that for such an alternative to work, it isn't a niggardly autonomy but indeed the possibility of self-determination for the occupied territories that is the key?

Secondly, the political elimination of the PLO, which he seeks, cannot be obtained without its military annihilation (an evacuation of the PLO to various Arab countries would undoubtedly lead to a reconstitution, not of its military might—which was never much—but of its political and symbolic roles). In other words, the "political victory in Lebanon" that Professor Walzer wants would advance the cause of a settlement of the Palestinian problem on the West Bank only if the PLO disappeared altogether—not just from Beirut. And the cost of that elimination is not something that the author of *Just and Unjust Wars* ought to endorse, since it would entail more terror bombings and more civilian losses than could ever be justified either by the casuistry of some sophists of violence or by the well-meaning but far-fetched political hopes Walzer expresses. Surely this is not an instance of "supreme emergency." This isn't England in the summer of 1940. What Begin has been doing neither falls within the categories of legitimate causes of war that Walzer has outlined, nor does it respect the laws of war. This doesn't mean that the PLO has committed no crimes of its own, or no political blunders. But since when do one side's faults allow the other to violate all requirements of proportionality, all the bans on aggressive uses of force and on attacks on civilians? To say, as some have, that the presence of PLO fighters among the civilians justifies the assaults on Beirut is unacceptable: for Israeli tactics are hardly selective, it is the civilian population of half a million that is made to suffer, and its opportunity to leave (deemed essential by Walzer in the case of a siege) is now practically nil.

The only thing "political victory in Lebanon," accompanied or not by the total annihilation of the PLO fighters, might accomplish is the beginning of a restoration of a Lebanese state. But this would also require an Israeli and a Syrian withdrawal. Moreover, when American armed forces thought they had to destroy Vietnamese villages in order to save them, Professor Walzer and I were horrified and indignant. Isn't this exactly what Israeli bombs are doing to the Lebanese of west Beirut?

STANLEY HOFFMANN
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Michael Walzer replies:

I will take up Stanley Hoffmann's points in order. First, I certainly agree that real autonomy for the Palestinian Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza is no part of Prime Minister Begin's program. That is why I called for the "defeat of Begin on the West Bank," a prospect that I made parallel to the defeat of the PLO in Lebanon. What I tried to argue is that the Israeli attack, whatever Begin's intentions, might well produce one of the necessary conditions of real autonomy: a shift of power within the Palestinian world from the refugees in Lebanon to the inhabitants of the occupied territories. Professor Hoffmann insists, with more passion than seems appropriate, that this is not a sufficient condition. He is right. The successful completion of the Camp David peace process depends, as did its initiation, upon a sustained and vigorous American foreign policy. Arabs and Israelis won't make peace by themselves; they both have to be moved out of well-established positions. The ultimate effect of Camp David will surely be self-determination for the occupied territories, but that will come, for reasons that have to do with the long history of Palestinian revanchism, at the end, not at the beginning, of a political process.

Second, I do not seek, or support the Israelis in seeking, the "political elimination" (let alone the "military annihilation") of the PLO. In an earlier article ("Lebanon: What Kind of Triumph?" TNR, July 5), I described that as an impossible and unworthy goal. But I certainly welcome the political *defeat* of the PLO, and I believe that the limited military operation required to inflict that defeat can be defended under the theory of just war. At the same time, in my original article and on a number of public occasions since, in Israel and in this country, I have been critical of Israeli actions that aim at goals beyond the defeat of the PLO or that put Lebanese or Palestinian civilians at risk in morally unacceptable ways. In the second week of the war, I criticized the bombing of west Beirut; I have not changed my mind about that since. Nor do I believe that the reconstruction of the Lebanese state can justify *Israeli* military action (it might justify Lebanese military action). But Israel can defend itself against the consequences of Lebanese anarchy.

I learned long ago from Professor Hoffmann that politics and war are complex matters and that mere indignation is rarely an adequate response to either. Moral and political analysis is called for; judgments must be careful and precise. Now I must remind my colleague and friend of his own lesson. Have the Israelis, as he says, violated "all the requirements of proportionality, all the bans . . . on attacks on civilians"? In the fighting around Beirut, they have violated some of the require-

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FROM WASHINGTON

Reagan's Follies

Ronald Reagan is a nice man with dangerous notions. We got to thinking about it last week as we watched him deliver his effective economic appeal to the nation. The only prop he had on the desk in front of him was the speech. He wasn't reading it, though. He was getting it from the teleprompter, which permits him to look right at you while he follows the text through the one-way glass. Every now and then he remembered to turn a page.

It is great drama because Reagan is testing whether he can extricate himself from his own folly and get the country behind him after his debacle with supply-side economics. "I never understood all that supply-side business!" Senate Finance Committee chairman Bob Dole amiably admitted on NBC last week. It recalled budget director David Stockman's own admission in last December's *Atlantic Monthly*, "None of us really understands what's going on with all those numbers." He was referring, of course, to the Reagan budget. Stockman ran into trouble when he went to his boss at the peak of Reagan's 1981 triumph in Congress and told him privately that something had to be done *right away*—supply-side economics wasn't working out: cutting taxes and raising defense spending all at the same time was producing a terrifying deficit. But the President wouldn't listen and the financial crisis which Stockman had predicted occurred right on schedule. Now we have the larger drama of seeing America, which has a mystical bond with its President, coming to his aid when he says the nation is in trouble, that he needs help, and that we must all rally around. Very good—I hope Reagan wins the tax battle. But we must remember that he was the one who got us into the mess.

I offer a second example of where I think Ronald Reagan's simplicity is dangerous, and I use the word advisedly. His one-dimensional view of Soviet Russia, I think, hardens the relationship, angers allies, and threatens confrontation. Sure, Moscow is wrong about Afghanistan and Poland. It deserves our rebuke. But the hope of the world lies in improved relations, however slow, such as were being worked out by Richard Nixon and others. Reagan is not moderate in this field, he is radical. He promised to increase U.S. arms spending 7 percent a year, adjusted for inflation, the biggest military build-up in the nation's history. He cannot make a speech now without charging that the Democrats permitted the creation of an arms gap, though there are as many experts on one side of this argument as on the other. His goal is an increase of something like $1.6 trillion in Pentagon spending over the next five years. Congressional Republicans understood he would make cuts in the rate of arms spending this year, but there is little to show for it. He has named hawks to the Geneva negotiations, rejected proposals for a summit with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, and, although Europe will produce only 45 percent of its own gas in ten years (it now produces 85 percent), he threatens sanctions against our allies if they help Moscow build the Siberian gas pipeline. "Is he beginning a crusade politically to destabilize the Soviet Union?" former British Prime Minister James Callaghan asked in amazement during an interview with David Brinkley on August 15. "What about U.S. wheat to Russia?" Callaghan asked. If the Reagan Administration feels this way, at least it has the responsibility "to sit down and say to the Europeans we want to change our policy," and argue it out "instead of just issuing a fiat."

Everybody likes Reagan. But the budget is a mess and the cold war intensifies.

Reagan's extraordinarily simplistic ideology, illustrated in examples like his supply-side economics and his at-

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
SEPTEMBER 6, 1982

LET'S FREEZE PLUTONIUM

The campaign for a U.S.-Soviet nuclear freeze seems to have accomplished the laudatory goal of nudging the Reagan Administration into purportedly serious arms talks. But the freeze movement has tended to ignore—and has allowed the Administration to ignore—the threat to humanity posed by the spread of nuclear weapons to nations and movements that are far less stable and responsible than the United States and the Soviet Union. For all the justified anguish it has aroused, the possibility of a nuclear war between the superpowers is in fact comparatively small. But the danger of war will be far greater once balances of nuclear terror exist—as surely they will, if matters continue as at present in South America, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, and East Asia. And if nuclear weapons spread to shaky dictatorships, they can fall into the hands of terrorist groups, military plotters, and political and religious fanatics. There is still time to forestall the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world, but it will take leadership from the U.S. The Administration is not providing that leadership. Hence, a movement is needed to push the Administration—and this is one movement that can unite liberals, conservatives, and centrists. This is an issue both of arms control and national security.

Two objections are often heard about making nuclear proliferation a high-visibility, high-politics issue. One is that the problem is remote and theoretical. The other is that nuclear technology is so widely dispersed in the world that "the genie is out of the bottle" and therefore nothing can be done. The two objections are contradictory, although that does not prevent some nuclear industry spokesmen and Reagan Administration officials from making both. More important, both objections are factually wrong.

The danger of nuclear proliferation is not remote. Five nations now openly possess nuclear weapons. India has exploded a "device." Israel probably has a small arsenal ready for assembly. Next in line, probably, is Argentina, a military dictatorship whose recent history has been characterized by persistent chaos. As the 1982 yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported in the spring, "it is estimated that Argentina's power reactor has already produced enough plutonium, contained in spent fuel, to make several dozen nuclear bombs of the Nagasaki type." To make a bomb, the plutonium in spent fuel needs to be extracted chemically. This is a capacity Argentina doesn't have yet, but it is building a pilot reprocessing plant right now. It also has expressed interest in building a breeder reactor, which uses plutonium as fuel and produces more of the stuff than it burns up. It takes just eleven pounds of plutonium to make an atomic bomb.

Not only is Argentina developing the capacity for nuclear weapons, it has also demonstrated the will. It has refused to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. It refuses to submit to "full-scope safeguards" by the International Atomic Energy Agency, ineffective as such safeguards are known to be. The director of Argentina's atomic energy agency has said that his country now feels free to develop nuclear-powered submarines, using as an excuse the fact that Britain employed them in the South Atlantic. Before the Falklands war, Western intelligence officials estimated that Argentina could produce its first crude bomb by 1985.

Argentina may get the first "Latin bomb," but Brazil is figured to be only five years behind. It has not signed the NPT either, nor does it submit to IAEA safeguards. The same kind of regional nuclear rivalry could develop earlier in the Indian subcontinent, where Pakistan is developing the first "Islamic bomb." Taiwan, if it becomes seriously worried about a takeover by the People's Republic of China, may seek nuclear capability as well. Other countries believed to be interested in nuclear weapons include Iran, Libya, South Africa, and Iraq—an unsavory stew.

It is sometimes argued that widespread possession of atomic bombs will be good for peace, deterring war as the U.S.-Soviet balance of terror has done for thirty-

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five years. However, deterrence requires a rationality thus far not shown by the likes of Iraq's Saddam Hussein or Iran's Khomeini, or even the generals and admirals in Argentina. And if two regional powers get involved in a nuclear war, their major allies might be drawn in as well. Even more nightmarish is the possibility that a terrorist group or a terrorist state could get hold of a nuclear weapon and explode it in the capital of some nuclear country. This could be the atomic equivalent of the pistol shot at Sarajevo. Anyone who thinks this is merely political-thriller stuff should contemplate the fact that the Red Brigades terrorists who kidnapped General James Dozier in Italy questioned him extensively about the whereabouts of nuclear weapons in Europe. And that Libya's Muammar Qaddafi has made attempts to buy a bomb. And that, had the Shah of Iran developed nuclear weapons, Khomeini would now have them for use against Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel, or even the U.S.

The ultimate horror need not happen for the world to be changed for the worse by the spread of nuclear weapons. Small neighbors of new nuclear states will be intimidated. The influence of the superpowers will be further eroded. The incentive for preemptive strikes—such as Iran's unsuccessful raid on Iraq's reactor, and Israel's successful one—will grow. Revolutions and coups in nuclear weapons states will necessarily become matters of vital concern (and, possibly, causes of intervention) to faraway nations.

THE INDUSTRIALIZED countries, led by the United States, need to do all they can to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. They are doing the opposite. Argentina got help in building up its nuclear potential from West Germany, France, Switzerland, Canada, and Italy. A similar cast has helped Brazil and Pakistan. France is selling fuel to India. Twice the U.S. Senate has unanimously urged President Reagan to bring up the nuclear proliferation at economic summit conferences, and twice he has ignored the plea.

The ugly fact is that the major industrialized nations place their commercial interest ahead of world security. The U.S. and its allies insist on producing plutonium and exporting the technology and equipment that enables other countries to do so. By law, the U.S. does not supply nuclear equipment and fuel directly to countries that refuse to abide by international safeguards, but the Reagan Administration has decided that the U.S. should be a "reliable supplier" to countries it determines do not present a proliferation "problem." Unfortunately, some of these countries do supply nuclear material to "problem" countries, and the U.S. does nothing to stop them.

The Reagan Administration has also set the U.S. on a "plutonium track," in the apparent belief that reprocessing plants and breeder reactors promise a magic future of cheap power. The Administration is considering construction of a reprocessing plant at Barnwell, South Carolina, and is committed (under pressure from Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker) to the Clinch River breeder in Tennessee. What's more, it is talking about diverting spent commercial fuel to weapons manufacture. All of this provides no example of leadership to the rest of the world. At the moment, most of the world's plutonium is locked up in spent fuel. But if present trends continue—with reprocessing plants in planning or construction in a dozen countries—by the end of the century hundreds of tons of separated plutonium will be produced each year, enough for thousands of bombs.

NONE OF THIS is necessary—economically, technically, or politically. It is entirely possible to fuel electric power reactors with low-enriched uranium, which is a tenth as expensive as plutonium and exists in quantities sufficient to fulfill the world's needs well into the next century. Technically, the nuclear genie is not irrevocably "out of the bottle." Many "genies" need to escape before the world has multiple nuclear powers. Trained engineers, precision machinery, computers, and large-scale construction capability are needed to build a bomb, in addition to plutonium or highly enriched uranium. According to proliferation expert Henry Sokolski of Stanford University's Hoover Institution and the Heritage Foundation, "Who gets what and when matters. If proliferation is inevitable, less is better, later is better, and farther away is better."

The Reagan Administration, in its eagerness to be a "reliable supplier," has given up its leverage. Instead of fighting the reprocessing of plutonium, it has given European countries and Japan long-term approval to reprocess fuel supplied by the U.S. It has not demanded that South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil abide by international safeguards, and has done nothing to beef up or replace the loose IAEA inspection system. The Administration even opposed a piddling $13-million expenditure for research into a method that would make uranium cheaper than plutonium and leave less waste.

The U.S. needs to be taking all such measures. It should push for a worldwide plutonium freeze—a negotiated ban on the production of plutonium and on the export of reprocessing technology. It should tighten U.S. export controls on items that might be used for bomb-making. It should be willing, when it sells fuel abroad, to take back the spent waste product. It should spend at least as much on research into alternative energy sources as it does on nuclear power, instead of skewing the Department of Energy budget massively to nuclear. It should take the lead in developing stronger international inspection procedures and sanctions for countries that reject safeguards.

The Reagan Administration seems so dedicated to making plutonium the wave (and curse) of the future that concerted public opposition is necessary to change

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national policy. That opposition can be nonpartisan and nonideological. At the moment, in fact, the principal critics of Reagan policy happen to be centrists of both parties—Democratic Senators John Glenn and Gary Hart and Republican Senator Charles Percy. Mr. Glenn and Mr. Hart are prospective Presidential candidates. We urge them to make a proliferation freeze the kind of major campaign issue that others intend to make of the U.S.-Soviet freeze.

Again, The Poor Pay

Not long ago, Ronald Reagan found the tax bill now making its way through Congress so distasteful that he compared supporting it to "embracing a greased pig." More recently he has decided that both he and the tax bill are, after all, consenting adults. Hence his extraordinary performance on August 16, when he went on national television to plump for the bill and to proclaim himself the champion of economic fairness. As Mr. Reagan likes to say, don't you believe it.

Last year the President was selling domestic spending cuts as a way to achieve tax cuts. This year he is selling tax increases as a way to achieve domestic spending cuts. Heads he wins, tails we lose. Either way, the President has not retreated from his strong (if tacit) conviction that the budget should be balanced on the backs of the poor—the one strain of consistency left in the detritus of Reaganomics.

While Democrats have quietly delighted in the internecine Republican struggles, few have been moved to bring the $12.8 billion cuts in Medicare to public attention. Nor have many Democrats complained about the $1.9 billion cuts in food stamps. These retrenchments come on top of the huge cuts enacted last year in the President's moment of triumph. By passing a bloated defense appropriations bill of more than $175 billion, moreover, the House Democrats again gave Mr. Reagan almost everything he asked for. And the waiters and waitresses who serve those still tax-deductible three-martini lunches are now to have taxes withheld from their tips.

The President embraced the tax bill reluctantly, despite its equitable features. This hardly qualifies him as a crusader for fairness. But he still rules Washington, mainly because he has persuaded the Democrats to fight him on his own terms. Thus, while more funds for infirm old people and poor people slipped away, the Democrats in conference agreed to a provision which would save the Washington-based Marriott Hotel chain $55 million. As long as the Democrats prefer Marriott to Medicare, Mr. Reagan will continue to enjoy supremacy.

Death On The Seine

Once again Paris has become the bloody scene of anti-Semitic terrorism. In the last two weeks there have been six such incidents, including the bombing that took six lives outside Jo Goldenberg's restaurant in the Marais section. Some have tried to blame these attacks on Israel's invasion of Lebanon. By destroying the military wing of the PLO, the argument runs, Israel has left Palestinians with no outlet except terrorism for their frustrated nationalism. Those who find this rationalization convincing point to a message scribbled on a building wall near one of the targets in Paris, which certified, according to the Associated Press, that the bombing was in retaliation for Israel's actions in Lebanon.

To explain away these attacks by invoking Lebanon is to overlook the fact that terrorists attacked Jews and their supporters long before. In 1979, thirty-three people were wounded by a grenade thrown into a Parisian Jewish youth hostel; in 1980, four people were killed in the attack on a synagogue in the Rue Copernic. Last year in Vienna a synagogue was attacked, leaving two people dead; and several supporters of Israel, including Heinz Nittel, a Vienna city councilman, were murdered. These countries feel that they are innocent victims of the wars of the Middle East.

The writing is on the wall: the scrawled message in Paris informs Jews everywhere that by virtue of being Jewish they are responsible with their lives for Israel. The pattern of anti-Semitic violence pre-dates Lebanon, and European governments have an obligation to do all they can to break it.

Notebook

☐ ABRAHAM BRUMBERG, whose article "Poland's Paralysis" begins on page 16, becomes a Contributing Editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC with this issue. Mr. Brumberg, an expert on Communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular, was for twenty years editor-in-chief of the bimonthly *Problems of Communism*, probably the best periodical ever published by the U.S. government. Mr. Brumberg has covered the Polish crisis for TNR since the early days of Solidarity. His latest book, *Poland: Genesis of a Revolution*, will be published by Random House this year.

☐ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech on the prohibition issue at Sea Girt is a felicitous one. He states well the case against the Eighteenth Amendment and national prohibition; he

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beautifully exposes, with his Delphic-oracle simile, the cloudy and ambiguous words of the Republican platform and the Republican leaders on the subject; he shows unmistakably that President Hoover uttered a falsehood in charging that the Democrats propose to do away with federal control entirely and permit the return of the saloon; he properly ridicules a party which carries water on one shoulder and rum on the other by the combination of a Wettish presidential candidate with a Dryish vice-presidential candidate." (Editorial, September 7, 1932.)

A bogus thriller.

THE IMPLOSION PLOT

QUICKER THAN you could say "Paul McCloskey," the word was out. Israel, in conjunction with the United States, had deployed a lethal new weapon in west Beirut. They called it the "vacuum bomb"—a gruesome device with the purported power to wrench nature inside out. Testimony to its effectiveness came from—yes—an official Congressional delegation. On a recent Saturday, tickers all across America disgorged the news:

> WEST BEIRUT, August 7 (UPI)—A U.S. Congressional Delegation investigating possible Israeli violations of arms sales agreements Saturday charged Israel used a U.S.-built vacuum bomb to flatten an eight-story building in West Beirut.
>
> The vacuum bomb is designed to suck air out of the target over which it is detonated and causes an implosion that destroys the target. . . . The building was demolished without any sign of fire or shrapnel while surrounding buildings were unscathed.
>
> . . . The Soviet news agency Tass said in a dispatch from Beirut it was the first time 'in the history of military operations' that a vacuum bomb had been used operationally. Tass castigated the White House and the Pentagon for supporting Israel.

Quite a story. But it didn't take long for it to fall apart. The official Congressional delegation turned out to be neither official, nor Congressional, nor a delegation. The State Department had tried to discourage the group from traveling to Lebanon. The offices of House Speaker Tip O'Neill and Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, which must approve official delegations, disavowed any ties to the sojourners. The organizer of the trip is a fugitive from the law.

The caper began innocuously enough. Congressional staffers started receiving phone calls in mid-uly from one Karen Ayazi, a word processing machine erator at the Democratic Congressional Campaign mittee, and Franklin Lamb, a former member of the Democratic National Committee, offering a free fact-finding tour of Beirut, the purpose of which was to prepare a report on "human rights" in the Lebanese capital. Lamb and a third organizer, John Rogers, often identified themselves as members of the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress.

Those who bothered to check found that neither Lamb nor Rogers was employed at the Library. Some of them tried to investigate the group sponsoring the junket, Americans Concerned for Middle East Peace. Americans Concerned for Middle East Peace is not to be confused with Americans for Peace (which operates from Palestine Information Office headquarters in Washington) or Concerned Americans for Peace (which recently placed a bogus ad in several major newspapers with money laundered through a Swiss bank account), or even Americans for Justice in the Middle East (which is supported largely by the Arabian American Oil Company). The suspicious staffers had trouble tracking down Americans Concerned for Middle East Peace and its funding sources, but they soon discovered a number of, well, inconsistencies.

Lamb and Rogers had asserted that representatives of Senators Jesse Helms, Barry Goldwater, James McClure, and Charles Percy, as well as many House staffers, had agreed to take the junket. In fact, hardly anyone had consented to go. "It was an absolutely slimy operation—I felt used," recalls one staffer, who, when he did some investigating, found that the Palestine Red Crescent Society, headed by Yasir Arafat's brother, was a co-sponsor. "Hundreds of people parade in here every day to offer free perks and the like," says one aide to McClure. "We just don't take all offers seriously." Brenda Pillars, an administrative assistant to Democratic Representative Shirley Chisholm of New York, was the only bona fide Congressional staffer to take the junket. She says she went as a "private citizen," and knows only that the trip was paid for by "private American citizens."

WHILE IN BEIRUT, says Pillars, the group attempted "to be as objective as possible and talk to as many factions as possible." In addition to Karen Ayazi, Franklin Lamb, and Brenda Pillars, the entourage included Susan Hedges, who is apparently a friend of Lamb's, and Ted Holliday, an acquaintance of Walter Fauntroy, the District of Columbia's delegate to the House of Representatives. The group visited both east and west Beirut, talking with Palestinians and Lebanese, Christians and Moslems—talking with everyone, it seems, except Israelis. "We chatted with a couple of Israeli soldiers, but we didn't speak Hebrew too well, so that was a problem," Pillars concedes. The group, which traveled by helicopter from Cyprus to Lebanon in late July, took many pictures and is planning a photo presentation and press conference on the Hill. Pillars confirms that the Red Crescent helped sponsor the trip, but insists

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they were only tour guides, not contributors.

The yarn would appear to end there, with perhaps a wry comment about the way Americans Concerned for Peace in the Middle East were unconcerned about honesty in the United States. But there remains the curious case of the vacuum bomb, which sucked itself into news tickers and onto airwaves across the country. Pillars says the UPI dispatch stemmed from a conversation at Beirut's Commodore Hotel, as a few members of the "delegation" chatted with a few members of the press. Susan Hedges, who said she was doing research for McClure (she was not), was discussing a bomb she claimed to have seen the previous day. Pillars says the report resulted from the misperception of a reporter.

THE UPI CLARIFIED its first story with denials from Washington about the group's official status, but each subsequent version left many of the inaccuracies intact and added new distortions. The UPI has yet to send out a clear retraction. Some UPI subscribers swallowed the story. ABC-TV's Washington affiliate began its report by quoting "Congresswoman Susan Hedges" and went on to describe the vacuum bomb's horrors. But if the UPI must absorb the blame for disseminating disinformation, it at least should have the comfort of knowing it was snookered by a pro.

Franklin Lamb, the group's organizer, served on the 360-member Democratic National Committee from 1976 to 1979 as a member from Oregon. He had been a contributor to the Portland *Oregonian* until the paper challenged the authorship of two articles on China appearing under his byline in July 1978. Later that year, Lamb became embroiled in a controversy over his role in organizing a trip to Taiwan for eighteen of his DNC colleagues. The Justice Department charged that Lamb had paid for the trip with money obtained from a front group for Taiwan's nationalist government without registering as a foreign agent. Lamb said the idea for the Taiwan trip had originated in the DNC's China Task Force. Then-DNC chairman John White said the committee did not have a China Task Force.

On March 18, 1980, Lamb distributed a statement to reporters in Washington, identifying himself as a member of Ted Kennedy's Presidential campaign staff. *The New York Times* said on March 19 that Lamb called for most-favored-nation trade status for the Soviet Union, continuing arms sales to Taiwan, and establishing an independent Palestinian state. The next day, Paul Kirk, Kennedy's political director, banished Lamb from Kennedy headquarters, where he had been an unpaid volunteer.

As of May 1980, wrote John Painter, a reporter for *The Oregonian*, Lamb's name appeared "as a defendant in at least eleven cases filed in Multnomah County [Oregon] District and Circuit Courts." Some of the suits requested recovery of bank overdrafts, payment for moving expenses, and recovery of unpaid student loans. A lawyer who successfully defended Lamb on shoplifting charges has since sued him for recovery of unpaid legal fees.

On December 30, 1981, customs officials apprehended Lamb in New York and sent him to jail for failing to show up in Portland for trial on three misdemeanor counts of charging phone calls to other people's accounts. He was found guilty of two counts on January 15 of this year; at the time he was also awaiting trial on charges that he solicited sex from an undercover police officer. A presentencing report on the phone fraud recommended that he receive six months in jail with no chance of release on pass or leave. Lamb skipped the sentencing hearing, and FBI officials in Washington are now investigating further charges of fraud.

Lamb's resumé on file with the DNC contains several inaccurate claims. In Washington, he managed to get appointed to the staff of the House Judiciary Committee before a routine investigation of his background turned up discrepancies. Last spring he approached Israeli embassy official Benjamin Avileah and requested funds for a research project on the West Bank, saying he was affiliated with the Library of Congress's research service. Avileah looked into his background and quickly dissociated the embassy from Lamb's importunings.

FRANKLIN LAMB wasn't deterred by such inconsequential matters as bench warrants for his arrest or failed schemes to dupe diplomats and government officials. He drummed up enough money to take a delegation to Lebanon, against the wishes of the State Department, which, after Representative McCloskey's visit to Beirut, has had enough of even nonbogus Congressional delegations. Lamb and his flock went anyway, and before long Americans were hearing about vacuum bombs.

Lamb is reportedly still in Beirut and is thus unavailable for comment. The Washington phone number for Americans Concerned for Middle East Peace has been disconnected. People are still wondering where Lamb, who cannot pay his phone bills, got the money for this jejune junket. Lamb frequently attended meetings with the Palestine Information Office—generally thought to be the PLO's Washington bureau—and has been known to boast of his desire to travel to Libya to confer with Muammar Qaddafi. There seems to be no limit to his persuasiveness. In the propaganda battle running parallel to the war in Lebanon, Franklin Lamb's "delegation" scored a small victory: implanting the image of a destructive weapon employed with American acquiescence. The sources of funding for Americans Concerned for Middle East Peace remain a mystery. The vacuum bomb? "It exists in the mind of Tass," says a Pentagon spokesman. "It originated there. And it will remain there."

LAURENCE GRAFSTEI

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Why civil rights is making a comeback, sort of.

THE NEW OLD MOVEMENT

BY BARTON GELLMAN

EARLY IN JUNE of 1981, a tense civil rights delegation filed into a fifth-floor conference room at the Justice Department to talk about the Voting Rights Act. Form preceded content. Elaine Jones of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund turned to William French Smith and, gesturing toward a Hispanic leader at her side, began the meeting like this: "Antonia Hernandez was not invited to this meeting, Mr. Attorney General, but she has agreed to come anyway—and if she leaves, we all do." Smith was shocked. He had demanded, despite objections from the civil rights community, that black and Hispanic leaders meet with him separately. Now they were calling his bluff. "We were insistent," says Ralph Neas, who attended the meeting, "that we were not going to let them play divide and conquer."

That scene could not have taken place ten years ago, or even five. As late as 1975 blacks and Hispanics were so deeply divided over key civil rights measures that they feuded bitterly in public. Generally, in fact, civil rights groups have often been diverted by intramural battles over priorities and tactics. But in the recent eighteen-month effort to extend and improve the Voting Rights Act, a broad coalition called the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights displayed a new maturity, an unprecedented unity, and an impressive political clout. Civil rights leaders are now beginning to wonder how and when they can apply it again.

They've done a good deal already. It's probably too soon to judge the impact on civil rights of the most conservative Congress and White House since the seminal legislation of the 1950s and 1960s. But the early indications are unexpectedly—if still tentatively—hopeful. The Reagan Administration, though it has conspicuously ignored the existing civil rights enforcement apparatus, has not been able to dismantle it. Meanwhile, the 97th Congress is soon to expire, and organizers paced by the Leadership Conference have not only helped stall every legislative attack on civil rights but also, against all odds, contrived the passage of the strongest and most bipartisan Voting Rights Act ever. The story of the voting rights battle, which went little noticed beyond the floor debate, says a great deal about the future of civil rights under Reagan.

As coalitions go, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights is a strange and unwieldy creature. It has no membership to speak of. Its constituents are themselves civil rights organizations, or organizations interested in civil rights, which is by no means the same thing. Some Leadership Conference members come as no surprise: the NAACP, the National Urban League, the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the AFL-CIO and many of its constituent unions, NOW, the League of Women Voters, the ACLU, and religious groups from the Catholic Conference to the Presbyterian Church. But the members also include Actors Equity, the Improved Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, the YMCA and YWCA, and business groups, albeit predominantly black ones, like the National Association of Real Estate Brokers, the National Beauty Culturists' League, the National Business League, the National Dental Association, and the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association.

When the Leadership Conference was founded in 1950, thirty groups signed on as members. Today there are more than five times as many. This sounds like good news, but there's a catch. The Leadership Conference operates by consensus, not majority rule. That means it can take no position unless it has unanimous support. The coalition's full-scale exertions—though crucial to every major civil rights effort since 1957—are therefore few and far between. "You don't do it every day, you don't do it every month," says David Brody of B'nai B'rith, who sits on the executive committee. "But you build on victory. You win a marathon today, you look ahead to next year's marathon." When it does gear up, says John Shattuck of the ACLU, "the coalition is infinitely more effective than any individual group or organization can be."

On voting rights, this lumbering, 160-headed beast turned its full attention to a single law and gave a show of what it can accomplish when aroused. The result was formidable. "The notion of working on issues in coalition has been around as long as I've been in this town—since the 1960s," says Jane O'Grady of the AFL-CIO. "It just hasn't always worked so well. On the Voting Rights Act we had almost everything come together." Top civil rights litigators—Frank Parker and Barbara Phillips from Mississippi, Armand Derfner from South Carolina, Laughlin McDonald from Georgia, Lani Guinier from New York—came to Wash-

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ington to help draft the legislation and give substantive advice. Experienced Washington lobbyists coordinated strategy in twelve- and fourteen-hour meetings around a brown felt-top table at the Leadership Conference's Embassy Row townhouse. And hundreds of thousands of people took part in a minutely planned grass-roots campaign that spanned fifty states and 435 Congressional districts. "We just overwhelmed them," says Representative Don Edwards, a California Democrat who chairs the Judiciary subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights.

No one was more surprised at this turn of events than the Leadership Conference. A year ago, Edwards was hosting gloomy strategy sessions in his Rayburn Building office, as coalition leaders pondered whether they could possibly slip the bill past the House, still less the Senate, without crippling amendments. The fact that Ronald Reagan, no great friend of the Voting Rights Act, was at the peak of his power in Congress did little to cheer the discussions. "See," Edwards burst out in one such meeting late last July, pointing as the vote on Reagan's tax package flashed across his video screen, "*that's* what Ronald Reagan can do." Not on voting rights. Reagan's pet amendments all failed, and not for lack of lobbying by the Justice Department. Joseph L. Rauh Jr., who has been with the Leadership Conference since the early days, still cannot conceal his amazement at the eventual 20-to-1 and 10-to-1 victories in the House and Senate. "Our fondest hopes of 1981 were exceeded," he says.

ALL THE strategists in Washington could not have put that victory together without the likes of Mona Martin, the president of the Iowa League of Women Voters. Charles Grassley, an Iowa Republican who sits on a key Senate subcommittee, was wavering on an important vote last March. The Leadership Conference in Washington sent Martin a list of local organizers from unions, church groups, black and Hispanic groups, farm and education groups, and Common Cause. Martin then applied the heat where it counted. The Church Forum—representing denominations from Catholic to Episcopal and Baptist to Presbyterian—sent out "minister advisories" suggesting sermon ideas on voting rights. A "media committee" held press conferences, distributed slick p.r. packages, wrote Op-Ed pieces, and took out a quarter-page ad in the *Des Moines Register*. Borrowing a WATS line phone bank from a local business, Martin organized "telephone trees," which work like chain letters. Grassley got five hundred calls from constituents in one day alone. "We were just letting him know that we expected him to do the right thing," Martin says. He did.

Variations on this theme played in nearly every state, with the organizing work shared in a classical division of labor. The Mexican-American group ran the Southwest grass-roots efforts, as did the Urban League and NAACP in the South, the AFL-CIO in the industrial Northeast, and so on. "Each group was there to provide the things that that group uniquely could do," says Althea Simmons, Washington director of the NAACP. All the coalition lacked was, well, the two main ingredients of most modern lobbying campaigns: a lot of money and a room full of computers. The usual pre-addressed, pre-printed, pre-paid postcards played no part in the Leadership Conference campaign. There was no voting rights PAC to dispense $5,000 in contributions to friendly Representatives and Senators. Yet the Leadership Conference managed as impressive a showing of legislative savoir faire as anything done by the big-time agriculture, defense, or business lobbies.

IN ALL THIS, the Leadership Conference followed time-honored methods. The coalition remains in many ways what it has always been, only more so. What began as an alliance of blacks, labor unions, and religious activists now includes organizations—of Hispanics, Asian Americans, women, gays, the elderly, and the handicapped—that had not even formed in the 1950s. There were coalition efforts as effective as this year's in the early days, but none were nearly so broad-based or so complicated. What the coalition has gained in breadth, on the other hand, it has lost in passion. Elks Lodges, fraternities, sororities, lawyers, farmers, and real estate brokers do not go around staging sit-ins and rallies. The coalition has become cautious, moderate, middle of the road. No one today refers to the Leadership Conference, in Representative James A. Haley's immortal words of 1964, as "those vultures in the gallery." As David Brody says, "The whole movement was much more visible in the 1960s. Today it might almost be called a nuts and bolts operation." But according to William Taylor, a former staff director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the nuts and bolts aspect has "enormous potential": "We've learned more about how to use community and grass-roots efforts. We now have more professionally skilled advocates for civil rights. You have had an expansion of civil rights law to encompass groups other than blacks. And the Reagan Administration has helped bring people together and see their basic common interests."

Well, yes and no. Basic common interests are more readily discerned in the abstract than in the details of legislation. Even on voting rights ("the purest brand of motherhood," one Senate staffer calls it) the Leadership Conference was hard pressed to keep its disagreements private. The coalition held, but only just. "It's very much like a collective bargaining situation," says O'Grady of the AFL-CIO. "Hot flames fly, and sometimes you just have to clear the room and cool off."

It got so hot in the coalition in the last two days of July 1981 that, by the time the differences were reconciled, a splinter group on the Conference's voting rights steering committee had already prepared an angry press release and begun planning how to fight

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its former allies. Much of the steering committee, fearing hostile amendments on the House floor, wanted to make concessions while the voting rights bill was still in Judiciary Committee markup. They favored striking a deal with Illinois Republican Henry Hyde that would have diluted crucial enforcement provisions in exchange for his support. Four dissenters said the deal was outrageous. "There was a whole lot of screaming and name-calling," says Antonia Hernandez. "It was a terrible time." Frank Parker, a red-bearded veteran of death threats and voting rights lawsuits in the South, was the purest of the purists. "Their judgment was totally and completely wrong," says Parker, who chain-smokes cigars and likes his adverbs in pairs. "We would have publicly and openly opposed the bill, and in fact we were developing a strategy to do that. It threatened to break up the coalition." The deal with Hyde finally fell apart, and the coalition decided—consensus renewed—to stop negotiating with him. There ensued an incident of extraordinary rarity in Congress: the four principal members of Edwards's subcommittee staff, incensed at the risks of abandoning Hyde, staged an angry walkout and refused to take part in redrafting the disputed section of the bill. "Everybody was yelling at everybody," recalls one of the aides. "At that point they decided to rewrite the whole thing. At that point I went home."

THIS WAS the worst of many disputes, and it raises doubts about whether the Leadership Conference will be able to hold its unity—its most potent weapon—on future issues. The man charged with maintaining that unity is Ralph Graham Neas, a 36-year-old dynamo who is the first full-time director of the Leadership Conference. Neas has perpetually tousled hair, a five o'clock shadow that arrives before noon, and the slightly red-faced look of overexertion. He has an uncommon pedigree for his job. "I'm white, male, Republican, and Catholic," he admits ruefully, "which is 0-for-4." Neas, a graduate of Notre Dame and Chicago Law School, spent eight years as the Senate's senior staffer on civil rights. He smiles well. He does his homework. He is a good coalition-builder. He is secretly pleased that *Glamour* magazine recently rated him among the top four male feminists in Washington. He says, "It's not often that you're going to bring together 160 organizations. But when you do, then you've got a dynamite situation. What I'd like to be able to do is to tap in repeatedly to those groups and those resources." He is an optimist.

Chances are that the Leadership Conference will not soon duplicate the scale of the voting rights effort. "You can't do it often," says a Congressional aide who has worked closely with the coalition. "It's physically, emotionally, psychically impossible." To say nothing of financially. For mailing and photocopying alone, many groups went through their whole annual budgets during the voting rights fight. Besides, there is the matter of finding another issue to prompt consensus. Many of the traditional civil rights causes won't do. Abortion, school prayer, and tuition tax credits split religious groups from libertarians. Immigration laws pit Hispanic groups against labor and the NAACP. Affirmative action divides blacks from some Jewish and labor groups. "I'm appalled at our position—or lack of position—on some issues," says Rauh. "People ask me all the time, 'How can you be general counsel to an organization that doesn't favor freedom of choice on abortion?' What we did with the Voting Rights Act is the answer."

That answer doesn't answer for everyone. Some civil rights leaders privately complain that the Leadership Conference is too timid or too established or too divided to represent them well on many issues. Relations between the coalition and other leaders—including Congressional Black Caucus members and Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH—have often been cool, and there are prominent omissions in the Leadership Conference's membership list. Arnold Torres, for instance, says his League of United Latin American Citizens, the nation's largest Hispanic group, is "just not ready" to join: "We look at them and we see how they address our concerns, and we decide it isn't enough. We don't want to feel as if we're going to be ignored."

If the coalition does gear up again any time soon, it will probably be to try to amend the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Many civil rights leaders say the act is going unenforced, and they want to put some teeth in it. But at least some members of the Leadership Conference are skeptical that the group can reach consensus at all.

IN ANY CASE, the coalition can more often agree about what it does not like. Hatch alone has introduced ten bills to weaken civil rights laws, including those concerning attorney's fees for civil rights lawyers and the right to sue local governments. Other bills pending would strip federal courts of jurisdiction on abortion, school prayer, and desegregation; roll back affirmative action programs; and consolidate all civil rights enforcement in the Justice Department. On these issues the Leadership Conference knows exactly what it wants: nothing of the kind.

Most of all, the Leadership Conference is no longer running scared. Back in February, the theme of its annual dinner was "Civil Rights in Crisis." Talk turned more and more to the dangers of a second Post-Reconstruction period, in which decades of civil rights gains might be wiped out by the President and Congress that took power in 1980. The Voting Rights Act has changed the picture considerably. Now, when Ralph Neas talks about the coming session of Congress, he says the victory can be repeated. He says the grass-roots supporters have been encouraged. He says he looks forward to "one hell of a fight after another." And he smiles.

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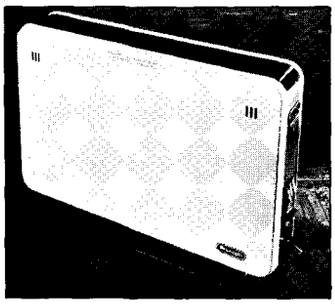

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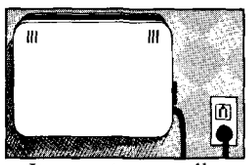

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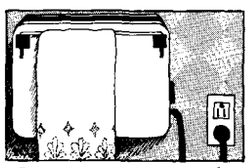

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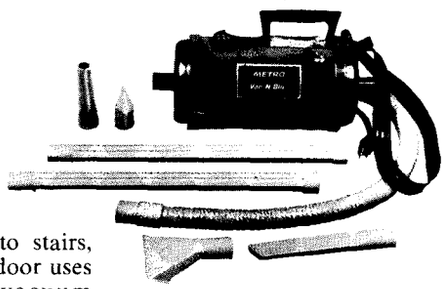

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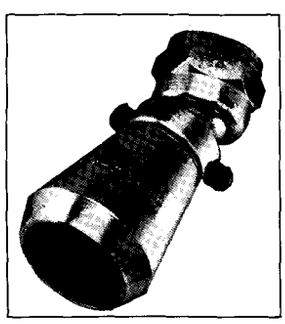
SAVINGS IN THE SHOWER



Tools for Living has discovered a finely crafted shower head called the Deluxe Fuel Saver manufactured by Con-Serv, which cuts the use of water—*hot water*—in the shower from 5 or 8 to 2.45 gallons per minute. Remember, heating water throughout the year is second only to the cost of heating the house. With the conventional shower head, the average family of four uses 300 to 400 gals. of water—much of it heated—every day. According to U.S. Department of Energy figures, with the Deluxe Fuel Saver that same family uses 70% less water in the shower and realizes a savings of between $150 and $350 depending on the utility rates. Con-Serv designed the new Deluxe Fuel Saver without compromising comfort or high quality. Although the amount of water is significantly reduced, it is aerated and accelerated—utilizing the Venturi principle—for an invigorating shower. It delivers a comfortable yet forceful spray—forceful enough to quickly rinse shampoo suds out of a long, thick mane of hair. The Deluxe Fuel Saver also offers a "trickle valve" that allows you to stop water flow while soaping up. Made of chrome-plated solid brass, the Deluxe Fuel Saver is accompanied by a one-year limited warranty. It installs easily over the standard ½″ shower head arm with pliers or a wrench—no plumber is needed. We offer the Con-Serv Deluxe Fuel Saver for **$16.00** ($2.95) #A351.

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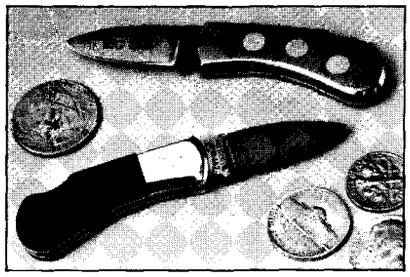
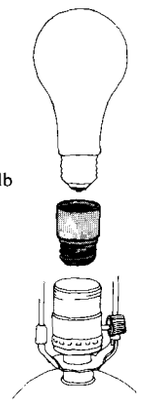
EXECUTIVE POCKET KNIFE



The pocket knife is a disappearing artifact. The clasp knife that for so many years rested comfortably in countless overall pockets is much too heavy and bulky to slip into tailored slacks. Now the pocket knife appears mostly among campers, Boy Scouts and farmers who still cut plug tobacco. But the loss of the pocket knife has cost us all a great deal of convenience. At least once a day some situation arises where a knife blade is called for—to open a letter or a box, to cut a cord or a thread, to coax out a splinter or loosen a knot. So we were delighted to find this new line of pocket knives that have no more weight or bulk than about a dollar's worth of loose change. These knives are only 2″ long and 5/16″ thick (with a 1¼″ well-honed stainless steel blade), but they are beautifully made and far more rugged than their modest size suggests. The blade has a safety lock, so it cannot close accidentally. These stylish knives are rather affectionately known as Big Bens and are available in two models: in polished stainless steel for **$16.00** ($1.95) #A419; or with a sandalwood handle for **$16.00** ($1.95) #A420.

CONVERT A BULB



The Convert-A-Bulb adds 1½″ in height to your light bulb.

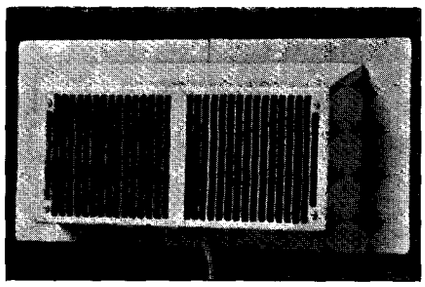
If your house is typical, you have at least two or three 3-way light fixtures. *Now you can save $15 per fixture when you next change the light!* Here's how.

Three-way bulbs have some major shortcomings. They are noticeably more expensive than regular bulbs, and they come in a limited range of sizes and styles. Also, a 30-70-100 watt 3-way light at the highest setting gives you only 1285 lumens of light; a plain 100 watt bulb gives you 1740 lumens.

The Convert-A-Bulb simply screws into your 3-way fixture and enables you to have *3-way action from a less expensive regular lightbulb.* You can use any screw-in standard base bulb from 7½ to 150 watts in your 3-way lamp with no loss of function! You also gain bulb life; 2 times rated life at the high setting, 6 times at medium and 30 times at the low setting!

This is where it gets interesting. Let's assume you replace a 50-100-150 watt 3-way bulb with a regular 150 watt bulb. What do you save? First, because of the lumen differential between regular and 3-way bulbs, you now get at the medium setting the same amount of light you formerly had at the high setting—a savings of 27 watts per hour. Now the regular bulb at medium setting will last 6 times its rated life of 750 hours, or a total of 4500 hours. The total savings is 121½ kwh. At 7¢ per kwh for electricity you save $8.50. Plus this: 3-way bulbs are usually rated at 1200 hours, so you'd need four of them at $2.20 each to outlast this one regular bulb, at $1.50. That's another $7.30 savings for an overall windfall of $15.80 over the life of *the first bulb alone!* The Convert-A-Bulb is U.L. listed. Buy one for **$9.00** ($1.95) #A495, two for **$17.00** ($1.95) #A496 or three for **$25.00** ($2.95) #A497.

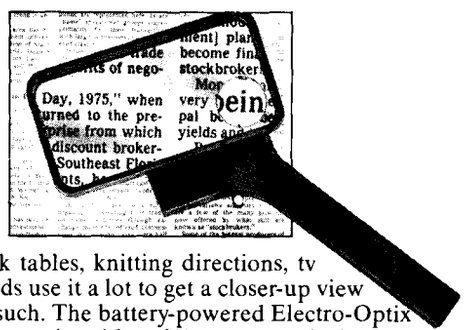
REGISTER FAN AND SEALERS



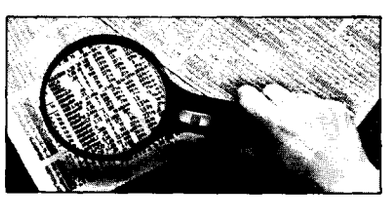
Every hot air heating system has at least one or two. Cold spots, that is—places that for some reason never quite get up to temperature. Often it is the rooms furthest from the furnace, an unusually large room, or rooms in a later addition. This booster fan (actually it is two small 4″ fans running together) fits right in the register outlet, sucks heat up the duct and pushes it out into the room. A heat sensor in the switch turns the fan on automatically as the heat comes up (there is also a manual control, which means you can use it in the summer to move the cool air off the floor and up into the room). The fan fits all registers up to 6″x14″ and plugs into any electrical outlet. It comes with 9′ of cord. The register fans cost **$40.00** ($3.95) #A536.

Magnetic Register Sealers prevent loss of air through unused outlets. Sealer kits require a ruler and scissors to install initially, after that they can be removed or replaced in a moment. Material for three 6″x14″ register covers costs **$12.00** ($1.95) #A539.

CONQUER FINE PRINT



The best way to beat fine print is to blow it up—with an illuminated magnifier. We keep ours near the telephone and use it for the phone book, medicine labels, dictionaries, classified ads, stock tables, knitting directions, tv listings and maps. The kids use it a lot to get a closer-up view of bugs and flowers and such. The battery-powered Electro-Optix magnifiers are American-made with a 2½-power optical-grade plastic lens with a 5-power insert bifocal eye. The lenses are distortion free, water clear and shatterproof. We have these lighted magnifiers in two models—round, 4″ diameter, 9 oz., using two "C" batteries for **$18.00** ($1.95) #A550; or rectangular, 2″ x 4″ reversible for either hand, 5 oz. using two "AA" batteries for **$16.00** ($1.95) #A551. Or buy both together for the special price of **$32.00** ($2.95) #A552 and put the smaller one in the car for map-reading.



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Solidarity lives, but so does marshal law.

POLAND'S PARALYSIS

BY ABRAHAM BRUMBERG

EIGHT MONTHS into Poland's "state of war," the regime's proclaimed goals of social peace and national reconciliation seem more distant than ever. The concessions announced by General Jaruzelski at a session of the Sejm (Parliament) on July 21 were calculated to show the West that Poland is well on the road toward liberalization, and that the junta might therefore again be entitled to some capitalist largesse. To most Poles, however, the concessions were just window dressing. The emergency laws—including restrictions on travel, censorship of mail, and surveillance of personal telephone conversations, and a ban on "unauthorized meetings" such as birthday parties—remain in force. They are to be lifted only if the population refrains from creating "tensions," resists the "counterrevolutionary" schemes concocted by "certain circles in the West," and learns (in the memorable phrase of Deputy Premier Mieczyslaw Rakowski) "to draw appropriate political conclusions." True, about a thousand internees have now been released ("from a small jail to a large one," as one of them drily told a foreign correspondent). But more than three hundred of them were only granted leave—if they misbehave they may again find themselves behind barbed wire. And over six hundred Solidarity leaders and advisers, including Lech Walesa, remain in detention.

Contrary to Western expectations, Jaruzelski did not proclaim amnesty for the two thousand prisoners sentenced since last December for various infringements of martial law, nor for the estimated four thousand people now under investigation. The Church, too, found its hopes dashed: the Pope's visit to Poland, which both the Vatican and the Polish Episcopate had thought would take place this August, has now been postponed until sometime next year—assuming, of course, the "right conditions" exist. Finally, the idea that Solidarity would be allowed to reemerge, even with its wings clipped, has been put to rest. In his July 21 speech to the Sejm, Rakowski reviewed the various proposals for a new trade union organization that had been aired in the Polish press since February, and declared that in view of Solidarity's "antisocialist" character, it should be treated "as a closed chapter in the history of the Polish People's Republic."

So much for national reconciliation. In the meantime, Poland's economic and social crisis continues. On June 9, the official youth newspaper, *Sztandar Mlodych*, admitted that young people were in the grip of disillusionment and hostility, leading not only to outbursts of rage but also to drug addiction and even "prostitution." In a country where 60 percent of the population is under the age of 30, these findings are surely a cause for concern. And so the Party's Central Committee devoted its last plenary session, on July 15 and 16, largely to problems of youth. Predictably, the meeting was long on rhetoric and short on practical proposals. But the Party explicitly spelled out its opposition to the three major demands raised by young people in 1980 and 1981: academic freedom, organizational autonomy, and an end to compulsory indoctrination. "The state," said Jaruzelski, "will never give up its right to define the aims and programs of national education. Schools and colleges cannot be the scene of the free play of various political forces and trends." To be sure, young people must be "consulted" more systematically than in the bad old days. But all decisions affecting their education must rest firmly in the hands of the Party.

What of the Party itself? According to official statistics, 205,000 members turned in their cards between December and April, in addition to the 400,000 who had already quit since 1980. At the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, where Solidarity was born, Party membership has fallen from 3,300 to 2,350. As one newspaper reported, members find their lockers daubed in red paint, with drawings of gallows, "and now and again the words 'So you are still in the Party!' can be heard." No wonder that for many Party members, the only "appropriate political conclusion" is to quit.

But it is the country's economy that has proved the most intractable problem. Polish readers were recently informed that in 1981 Poland's national income fell by 13 percent, and that even with massive injections of Western credits it will decline by another 22 percent in 1982. Over the past three months, prices of most consumer goods have risen by 100 percent. On July 26 the Central Statistical Office reported grimly on the precipitous "fall in material output" during the first half of 1982. Agricultural production, too, is at an all-time low. Government efforts to secure more grain have proved unsuccessful, and on August 4 Deputy Premier Roman Malinowski warned that unless things im-

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prove, the government might resort to compulsory deliveries—which raises the specter of a war in the countryside. As always, the problem is less economic than political: by "suspending" Rural Solidarity, the government has virtually assured itself of the non-cooperation of millions of peasants.

The press has tried to present a Panglossian view of Poland's troubles, but occasionally it comes forth with staggering revelations. On May 22, for instance, the weekly *Polityka* carried an article by the economist Mieczyslaw Nasilowski on the disastrous state of the Polish economy. According to the author, only 60 percent of industrial production capacity is now in use. Numerous projects, some of them nearly completed, have had to be abandoned. The country is short of raw materials, tools, machinery, and spare parts. Its "debts exceed many times over the admissible limits allowed by the cost of back payments and interests." The wage structure is in shambles. "Every system of material incentives for workers has been completely destroyed," and the idea of replacing cooperation and trade with the West with more extensive cooperation with Soviet bloc countries is a "dangerous illusion." Even more startling were the general conclusions. First, "no systemic reforms" of the economy could possibly be implemented as long as the "workers' self-management bodies are suspended." Second, "people will not listen to promises that some day things will improve and that they will have more to consume, because they see that they are still not masters of their destinies." Finally, if present trends continue,

> the power apparatus will gain power administratively and ideologically, but no urgent social and economic problems will be solved. The system will continue to be wasteful in production and unjust in sharing the cake because a power apparatus that is strong, authoritarian and devoid of social control must necessarily create privileges for the groups connected with it.

The implication is that only by coming to terms with a society unified by anger and frustration, and only by allowing Solidarity to resume its role as the institutional representative of Polish public opinion, can the country's awesome problems be solved. Yet it is precisely on this point, of course, that the military regime has proved fiercely recalcitrant. In retrospect, the military coup of December 13, however meticulously prepared and executed, was probably inspired by no greater wisdom than that expressed in the crisp Napoleonic adage (a favorite of Lenin's, incidentally), *on s'engage . . . et puis on voit*. Act now, think later: a bit of order, power, and judicious exercise of terror would bring the country around. In time, the regime would prove its magnanimity by filling workers' stomachs and letting them have some kind of union—cleansed of undesirable elements, and thoroughly subordinated to the Party. Perhaps Jaruzelski hoped that he could emulate the Hungarian leader Janos Kadar, who after seven years of martial law was able to bring relative economic prosperity and political liberalization to his subjects. But Kadar was dealing with a population traumatized by a war, occupation, and several years of brutal repression. Jaruzelski, unable to depend on the Soviet Union (whose economic resources are rapidly dwindling), and confronted with people overwhelmingly proud of the victories they scored during the sixteen months of renewal, could not pull it off.

Since December 13 two things have emerged in stark relief: first, Solidarity is very much alive; and second, the military regime is bent on bringing Solidarity to its knees, at whatever cost. Whether Solidarity will accept the full implications of Jaruzelski's position, and what lessons it will eventually draw from it, remains to be seen. So far its strategy has been, on the one hand, to organize workers, to strengthen its infrastructure, and, whenever necessary, to demonstrate its resolve to the authorities; and, on the other hand, to preserve its goal of reaching a compromise with the regime, even at the price of scaling down some of its original aspirations, especially those of a pronouncedly political character. As early as January, Solidarity leaders who had not been swept up by Jaruzelski's dragnet issued appeals to the population not to engage in acts of wanton violence, but to resist martial law by organizing themselves into an underground movement. Soon the first clandestine newspapers began to appear, initially in Warsaw and Gdansk, then in other cities. In time, their number grew to somewhere between six hundred and a thousand. Underground Solidarity chapters arose in factories throughout the country, some confining themselves to leafleting, issuing lists of collaborators, and collecting funds for the families of arrested workers, others engaging in actual work stoppages and

CARTOON BY BEN SARGENT

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demonstrations. On January 13 a number of Solidarity activists set up a National Resistance Committee (its acronym, OKO, means "eye"), designed to be a coordinating unit rather than a unified command structure, and several weeks later yet another network of organizations came into being—the so-called "social defense committees" (KOS), each composed of five members, and each in effect a local underground Solidarity cell. Another audacious achievement was Solidarity's underground radio station, whose first nine-minute program—sober, dignified, and thus all the more dramatic—was broadcast on April 9. Although its subsequent broadcasts were considerably shorter, and although it was forced to announce on July 22 that it was suspending the broadcasts for two months (probably as a result of the arrest of several people connected with the underground station), the fact that the union was able to fling so impudent a challenge at the authorities was a boost to its own morale and that of millions of its supporters.

Solidarity clearly had not been crushed, despite the best efforts of the police and the military. But its activities during the winter and early spring were sporadic and lacking in organizational cohesion. To remedy this, four fugitive Solidarity leaders—Zbigniew Bujak, chairman of Warsaw's Solidarity chapter; Bogdan Lis, a Gdansk activist closely associated with Walesa; Wladyslaw Frasuniak, chairman of the Wroclaw chapter; and Wladyslaw Hardek, unionist from Krakow—set up a Provisional Coordinating Commission on April 22. They have been joined by Eugeniusz Szumejko, also from Gdansk. There is no doubt about the prestige and authority of this body, especially of Bujak, an astute and moderate 28-year-old. It was the Provisional Coordinating Commission that issued the call that brought 40,000 demonstrators into the streets of Warsaw on May Day. Similar demonstrations were held in other cities, and on May 14, again in response to the Commission's appeal, hundreds of thousands of people halted traffic in the center of Warsaw and engaged in fifteen-minute work stoppages in factories, shops, and other establishments.

Yet Solidarity has been unable to compel the authorities to meet its minimal demands—the lifting of martial law, the release of all political prisoners, the restoration of Solidarity, and fidelity to the spirit of the Gdansk Agreement. Early in July Solidarity called for a moratorium on strikes and demonstrations as a gesture of good will and as a means of creating conditions for a "dialogue" between the union and the regime and for Pope John Paul II's proposed visit to Poland. The regime's response was another spate of articles furiously attacking Solidarity for its extremism, anarchism, and antisocialist character, followed by the bogus concessions of July 21. The message could not be more lucid: as far as the military regime is concerned, the conditions for "normalization" are the dismemberment of Solidarity and abandonment of any notion of a genuine contract between the society and its rulers.

For Solidarity the future looks grim, whatever course it decides to take. If it follows the advice of Jacek Kuron, one of the founders of the Workers Self-Defense Committee (KOR) who from his place of detention urged the union to establish a strong centralized command and to prepare for an ultimate confrontation with the regime, it risks either the rejection of such tactics by workers worn down by futility, or a violent clash from which it cannot emerge victorious. Yet to persist with moderate tactics is to risk engendering an even deeper sense of defeatism. There is a third possibility, too, freely admitted in Solidarity circles: an outburst of the Polish romantic tradition of armed insurrection against all odds. Reports from Poland speak of young "hotheads" ready to lay down their lives for the cause, as many of their forefathers had done over the past two centuries.

FOR NOW, Solidarity is sticking with its policy of passive resistance. In a series of proclamations issued on July 28, the Provisional Coordinating Commission contemptuously rejected Jaruzelski's measures as meaningless gestures, and called upon its members to continue its peaceful protests as a means of exercising "constant pressure on the authorities." One of the proclamations outlined the measures that must be implemented in order to create a full-scale "underground society" akin to the remarkable "underground state" that existed during the German occupation. As if to emphasize the link between that bleak chapter in Polish history and the present, several demonstrations were held in Warsaw on August 1, the thirty-eighth anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising against the Germans, in which 200,000 Poles lost their lives. At one of them, held at the Powazki Military Cemetery in Warsaw, yet another symbolic drama was enacted. Near the graves of many of the victims of the Warsaw Uprising, the cemetery has a memorial for the Polish officers shot by the Soviets in the Katyn Forest. As thousands gathered, a tape recorder began to play a message from Bujak, urging the Poles not to give up their struggle for freedom.

August 16 was the second anniversary of the founding of the interfactory strike committee in Gdansk (the predecessor of Solidarity). Although the gatherings in Warsaw, Krakow, and Wroclaw were reportedly small and peaceful, the Polish riot police moved in with fire hoses to disperse the crowds. It is difficult to say whether August 31, the date of the Gdansk Agreement, will be observed, as Solidarity has urged, with calm and resolute protest, or with violence and street fighting. Even more difficult, of course, are any predictions about the future shape and fate of the resistance movement in general. One thing is certain: as a result of the intransigent behavior of a regime determined to cling to power, the chasm between the society and its rulers has never been more profound, or more dangerous.

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The press room is not a room with a view.

THE WHITE HOUSE NEWS HOLE

BY NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

I AM SURROUNDED by Hindus, chocolate-complected gentlemen of overly precise diction, wearing Western business suits and striped shirts with white collars and cuffs. "Bureaucracy!" they cry. "Inefficiency! If you don't hurry I will miss the Prime Minister! She is coming at any minute!" They mill about, crowding against the wrought-iron fence of the White House.

As they do, the regular members of the Presidential press entourage shoulder past them, hold up their laminated press cards, and are buzzed through the gate by the same cop who, frowning, is hunting and pecking the strings of consonants of the Hindu gentlemen's names into a computer terminal. Once upon a time the press cards had THE WHITE HOUSE printed boldly on them, which made them excellent for cashing checks around town and impressing visiting cousins from Opelika. Now they carry only the mysterious letters PPR, but that is enough to expedite a regular through the rabble. Down the street come sirens, the noise of approaching limousined foreign officialdom. "Oh, it is she!" the Hindus cry.

"Look," an exasperated American woman scolds a guard, "my editor sent me down here from Boston. We called last week and they said I was cleared through." Standing next to her, a young man tries to explain, "I'm not with the media. I'm part of the delegation, the young conservative somethings, you let everybody else in." The guard tells him to use the wall telephone to call the relevant office. He can be heard explaining his shame at being left out on the street.

From the other side of the White House comes the noise of an artillery salute to the Indian Prime Minister; from our side of the White House, the noise of Hindu lamentations. "Oh, it has begun! Oh, it is too late! Oh, the bureaucracy! I am going to report this! It is an outrage! They shall hear of this!"

The Hindus and other visiting press turn away from the guards' kiosk to go their various ways on Pennsylvania Avenue in indignation and disappointment. If "they" ever hear of this, "they" would not be worried. The White House operation does not concern itself with the itinerant media dust trailing after visiting foreign comets, no more than it puts itself out for reporters on one-shot assignment from *The Toledo Blade* or *The Berkshire Eagle*. It's the regulars who are cosseted, for it is they who serve as the conduit for the announcements that come continually out of the White House and make even otiose Presidents like this one look like productive dynamos.

It is the regulars who are served with such efficient sedulousness that Curtis Wilkie of *The Boston Globe* says, "The White House press room is the only day care center in America Ronald Reagan hasn't abolished." There are also the irregular regulars, people like the widow of a long-departed White House correspondent who goes through all the motions of being a real reporter, even pays her way on the press plane, but files for no known news service; there is Lester Kinsolving, a right-wing clergyman of such braying brutishness that he is about as popular as botulism in canned tuna; and there is Sarah McClendon, who caused a minor national stir by arguing with the President at his last press conference about his lethargic lack of interest in discrimination against women government employees.

At 72 years of age, with a cracked voice and dyed hair, Ms. McClendon, who is a serious, hard-working journalist representing several Texas newspapers, can be made to seem like evidence that this press room is like the press rooms of yore, the workplace of funny, crazy, interesting, eccentric people. It is not. These rooms, jammed with carrels that a graduate student would find confining, these rooms to which young reporters hope some day to be assigned, which the public regards as the pinnacle of the profession, are where some of the dullest chores of the news business are routinely performed. It is a step up, but not a big one, from writing out obits dictated by undertakers on the telephone. "None dare call it journalism," Howell Raines of *The New York Times* is supposed to have said.

Being a paper's White House correspondent was once something a reporter would kill for; now the job kills the reporter, sentencing him or her to the living journalistic death of taking down announcements and passing them on. For the TV reporter there is the ego balm of passing the announcements on with the world looking at your face. Print or broadcast, though, the work of the White House correspondent has evolved into a task closer to stenography than journalism.

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"The press briefing is about to begin," the loudspeaker tells the occupants of the White House news hutch. The briefing room contains the platform with the blue curtain we see on television when people who have just seen the President submit to formal interviews. The seats are of the movie-house variety, blue upholstery in rigid plastic frames. The ones nearest the podium have nameplates, not of the reporters but of the companies they work for—ABC, the *Los Angeles Times*, United Press International. In the world of White House public relations, you are who pays you. The big conglomerates get the best seats.

A blond guy with a blow-dried hairdo, who, I am told, is Larry Speakes, the deputy press secretary, starts talking. David Gergen, Speakes's boss, used to do the briefing, but apparently he was so meanderingly incomprehensible that he had to surrender the job to his subordinate and rival. A man with a visitor's pass—he looks like a vacationing city editor from Kokomo—leaps up and detonates a Kodak in the direction of the reporters. Clearly he's shooting for the photo album, not the front page.

IT FEELS LIKE junior high school. Mr. Speakes is in the midst of telling the class that they will be taking a field trip to the Midwest, where the President will talk to a corn growers' association, when he notices a TV cameraman, undoubtedly an out-of-town irregular looking for some audience footage, up on the platform. "We don't normally stand on the platform," teacher says to this errant pupil, not in a nasty way but gently, as you would explain the rules to any newcomer.

"Larry," says the voice of an oldcomer in tones tired and put upon, "when are we going to get a grain announcement?" That morning *The New York Times* had carried a leak under the byline of its White House correspondent, Steven R. Weisman, that the President had decided to extend the Russian grain deal for one more year. Not a word in the rival *Washington Post*, a clear scoop of sorts for the *Times*. Such leaking is S.O.P. By announcing there will be an announcement the White House is able to get double on its news bubble: in a few days, after everyone has copied the *Times*'s story, everyone will then duly broadcast the official announcement of what we already know. At the same time, several reporters whisper, the Administration gets brownie points with the *Times*'s brass, but Weisman explains that his paper's agricultural specialists had been tracking the story. When it looked like the grain decision had ripened they let him know, so he was able to confirm it by enterprising telephone calls from his office, not by traipsing down corridors in the Executive Office Building. Such traipsing is, in any case, verboten. Reporters are kept contained in the news sty, where, as the briefing continues, some of the TV techs are now chowing down.

The UPI's Helen Thomas, Lebanese herself, asks several worried questions about what the United States might be doing there; Speakes parries. A woman from the Lyndon Larouche cult asks a few accusatory questions that Speakes has no trouble sliding out from under. In another jiffy the briefing is over. In the White House goldfish bowl, the reporters are the fish—desultory swimmers undulating their fins and bringing their O-shaped mouths to the water's surface to wait for flaky bits of dehydrated media food.

THE TRADITIONAL "adversarial relationship" is absent from the room. The White House press corps is more of a service group, like the people who shampoo the rugs, than it is a band of Hildy Johnsons, tallyhoing off after a scoop. The Watergate excavations, as the White House press has been repeatedly reminded, were made not by any of their number but by cityside reporters like Woodward and Bernstein and investigative specialists like Seymour Hersh.

Some of the men and women stationed in this place of tedium are outstandingly gifted. The corporations they work for tend to reward their best people by sending them to Washington and immuring them alive in the White House, where they can use neither their reportorial nor their literary talents. Newspaper writing is not only undistinguished but indistinguishable, all prose appearing in all papers being the bleary formula writing of the pyramid and the four Ws (or is it five?). Television reporting, which is limited to 250 words per story, is yet more closely confined to the formulas and conventions of the industry. The uses the camera are put to are closer to kabuki or the rubrics for saying High Mass than to an activity that fairly screams for invention and playful departures. There are four or five stock White House shots that are used for wars, birthday parties, tax increases, tax decreases, and the drop-bys of prime ministers and Dalai Lamas. The blue curtain shot, the West Lawn shot, the Rose Garden shot, and the Oval Office shot in front of the fireplaces, and you have the whole inventory. Washington news studio work is, if anything, more statically undeviating. Lighting arrangements and floor markers worked out in the mid-1970s are still in use. Would that the bravado camera work, technical lightheartedness, and zingy production used by the networks to bring us professional sports were used in reporting government and politics. Since the beginning of recorded history, the men and women involved in the work of governance have been carrying out the most exciting, colorful, suspenseful, dramatic, humorous, and tragic of occupations. From Herodotus on, those who have written about this work have been able to convey the hypnotic pandemonium of politics—until now. The modern journalist, working under the constraints and rules of his or her corporate employers, would make the creation of the universe a jejune, twice-told tale of cliché and claptrap.

The practitioners know it. To make sure that no one will miss any new announcements, the press office

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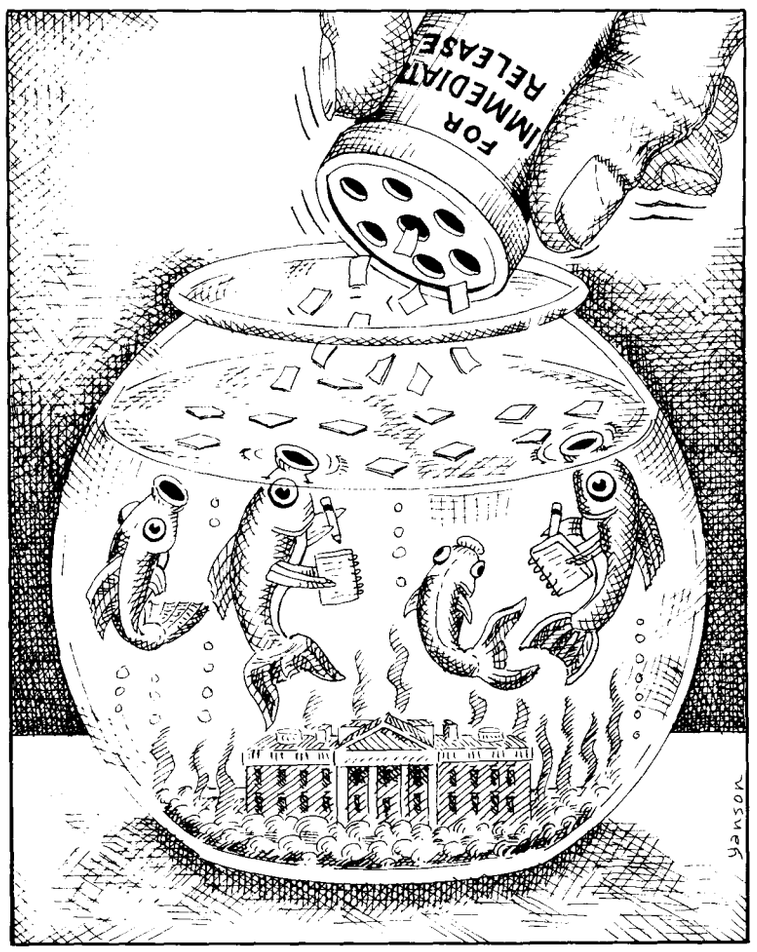
imposes the midday "lid"—a promise that nothing will happen for several hours so the reporters can saunter off to their lunches. As they leave they discuss how they were required to handle a recent Reagan foray to St. Louis in such a way as to denude it of its meaning. The President had made the trip as part of his ongoing effort to patch it up with the nonwhite 13 percent of the population, among whom his approval rating is now so low it is statistically undetectable using ordinary polling methods. One reporter says he wanted to describe a puzzled Ronald Reagan being rocked to and fro on the speakers' platform by a large black man, a retired major-league baseball player, as he gave the befuddled President the old-time black militant handshake. "At least he didn't try to high-five him," a second reporter says, and a third notes the irony that Mr. Reagan, who not so long ago toured the country denouncing welfare queens, now seeks out black athletes to get his picture taken with. As either color or comment these observations did not make, as newspaper people used to say of stuff that didn't get printed.



DRAWING BY JOHN YANSON FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

No doubt the media conglomerates would like to make the news more vivid and entertaining. But be it print or broadcast, that cannot be done without adopting a point of view. A point of view organizes, focuses, transforms; it is the lens that turns the ordinary into the extraordinary, but it is anathema at headquarters. A point of view may turn away customers who don't share it. This is an industry that will sell Communism or kid porn or both, that will pander and purvey values that ethically sicken its own executives, but only if there is a demonstrable market for it. Ergo, news is presented within the limits of generally held *idées récues.*

This being the case, there is no need for a White House press corps. One reporter for radio, another for print, and a camera crew for the networks would take care of the media's needs. Only an electron microscope can discern differences in the day-in, day-out White House story as presented by the major news organizations. Gifted reporters are sentenced to White House duty for reasons of corporate prestige. The viewers and the readers may not care, but the executives want to have their man, preferably, or their woman in the White House. It is thought that companies that keep a regular White House person stand a better chance of having their representative picked to go along on the occasional trip when the size of the media swarm has been cut back by the press office. For some White House reporters, the real work is being a prestige pimp for their bosses. When the boss comes to town, if the reporter has done his work well, browning his nose to a high polish with officialdom, the boss will have a private lunch with a Presidential assistant, or, if the company is big enough and the reporter resourceful enough, even an ecstatic private audience with Himself in the Oval Office. At the least, though, it is the reporter's job to make his boss's visit to town for the White House Correspondents' Dinner a salve for his superior's sense of self-worth.

Status strings are also pulled taut whenever the Chief Executive bethinks the hour propitious for a press conference. In Franklin Roosevelt's day, the press conference was an informative, if off-the-record, occasion for bantering give-and-take. Now it's a set-piece theatrical during which the already known is repeated for planned political effect. Of course, when F.D.R. was leaning back in his desk chair and smiling up over the clutter at the press corps—the conferences were held in the Oval Office back then—he was looking at perhaps a dozen reporters. One person, however, cannot have a sensible conversation with two hundred. The Presidential press conference, like many a scenic joy in our national parks, has been destroyed by its own popularity. It remains a manipulative tool

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of any President with the smarts to use it properly, which is why Curtis Wilkie could be heard mumbling, "I feel like a damn prop when I go to these things."

Besides being props at press conferences, reporters are actors—wordless crowd-scene extras, unless the President calls on them and thereby bestows the brief television stardom of a speaking part. Before Mr. Reagan's most recent extravaganza, one could hear NBC's Judy Woodruff say, as she moved out the press room door toward the East Room, "I'll never be called on in a blue blouse." Her tone was jocular, but the joke was rooted in the shared anxiety all have about getting called on by our democratic sun king.

Ray Jenkins, who worked in the press office under Jody Powell in the last Administration, says that one reporter came to him and offered to ask any question the White House might choose in return for being recognized. Back home in Detroit or New Orleans, editors and publishers watch these things, and if they see Mr. President, *lui-même*, recognizing their boy in the audience and calling on him by his first name ("Yes, Harold, what's your question?"), they figure Harold is in like Flynn with the biggies. Raises, promotions, more lenient examinations of expense accounts—all kinds of good things can flow from a "Yes, you're next, Harold."

FOR SOME who are required by their employers to pass weeks of somnabulant tedium in the press room, the necessities of ego and the demands of prestige rule out being present at such moments of small glamour as the press conference. They have been bounced by their bureau chiefs, who do not come around save when the little red lights on the television cameras go on. At the last conference the *Times*'s Steve Weisman was absent, though he wrote the front-page story that would appear in his paper the next day. He was back at the office, watching it on television. At the conference was Big Foot, as Hedrick Smith, the paper's top Washington honcho, is nicknamed. (In certain Washington circles the name is now used as a verb: to be bigfooted, i.e., to be blotted out by the ego of a powerful superior.)

The conference's atmosphere had the same kindergarten flavor as the press briefings. The best seats were assigned to the best pupils—that is, the ones up front were reserved mostly for the employees of the big media conglomerates. Japanese reporters, representatives of THE NEW REPUBLIC, rookies, and odd touring firemen sit in the back of the room, where they can do pretty much as they want as long as they don't distract the teacher. Behind me a young man and woman, from ABC it appeared, were comparing the amenities provided by the proprietors of their respective apartment houses. She had just moved down from New York and she is paying $365 a month for a largish one-room studio and she just can't believe what a bargain it is.

The class is brought to order with Mr. Speakes saying, "I'd like to welcome you to the fourteenth press conference." He adds in the cause of levity, an emotion that clashes with the dim face he shows the world, "Wilkie is attending his first press conference." The *Globe's* man, whom one of his colleagues describes as "the conscience of the press corps," has made no secret of the low regard in which he holds these exercises. One more jocose thrust from Mr. Speakes: "This is Bruce Drake's fourteenth birthday." Drake is a New York *Daily News* man, who, at an earlier press conference, got called on by the President in a deal apparently arranged by Gergen, Speakes's rival and boss. The deal was set up without Drake's foreknowledge, evidently for the purpose of being nice to the Chicago Tribune Corporation, which owns the *News*.

JUST BEFORE the conference is to begin, it is believed, the President studies the faces of the reporters on a television monitor to see who's who. He then brings a seating chart with him so that the bonbon of Presidential recognition, by first name if possible, will go to the good and be withheld from the naughty. In times past it was harder to work such a routine because the reporters used to jump up and down, snapping and writhing for recognition like sharks having a feeding panic in a herring ball. Now the pupils are not allowed to take their bottoms off their seats until they are recognized, thereby making it easier to call on people by consulting the cheater chart. How much information the chart contains is a subject of press room speculation. It would be interesting if one of these Harolds or Bills or Anns, having been called upon, would ask: "Mr. President, what's my last name?"

The reporters are well behaved. They sit in their chairs, taking notes without much whispering in class. When the President is speaking the only other sound in the room is the whizz-click of Canons and Nikons and Leicas. When an answer appears to be drawing to a close, the hands go up, waving back and forth like peristaltic cilia in the alimentary canal of the media goat, as Norman Mailer once described journalism's appetite for any tidbit.

Only two pupils misbehave. A man I couldn't identify, but who was thought to be "one of those television independents," got up in defiance of the school honor code and forced recognition in order to ask a well-put but argumentative question about Mr. Reagan's support of the balanced budget constitutional amendment. Sarah McClendon was the other who left her chair to seize the floor. Her questions, put to Mr. Reagan in prosecutorial tones, were too contentious for her classmates' tastes. She embarrassed them with her reedy voice and her excitedly tumbled grammar; they snickered as she struggled, and the President teasingly sidestepped her. If you are going to make the mistake of being a female over 60 in America, you'd better have Adolpho keep you dressed in red. Otherwise you are a bag lady.

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The next day the word around the press room was that the White House was pleased with how the conference had gone. The President's two days of prepping had paid off. He had not made the kind of obvious errors of fact that had allowed the media to take its ineffectual potshots at him in the past. (Actually, he had made several statements about Americans' take-home pay under his Administration that were not correct, but political reporters are seldom sharp on economics.) From the point of view of the press, it had been uneventful. Judy Woodruff had been recognized to ask a question about military expenditures and other people had been recognized to ask other questions about mandatory, in-the-headlines topics, to which the President gave the same answers his staff had been giving for weeks.

DRAWING BY JOHN YANSON FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

For television, whose news operations have grown up under federal regulation, such performances are dull. But they are also what the broadcasters like. Television has been shaped to be as much like a common carrier as possible, a neutral medium that carries other people's messages in a balanced and responsible—whatever that means—fashion. A press conference, particularly one carried in full and therefore demanding no editing and no exercise of judgment, is an ideal event, not for the medium per se, but for the medium as owned, controlled, and institutionalized in its present form. When television is doing what it has been trained to do, it has no facts of its own to present, only different spokesmen. PBS's "The MacNeil-Lehrer Report" and ABC's "Nightline" and "Good Morning America" shows specialize in this kind of journalism. NBC's "Today" does it increasingly, as does the "CBS Morning News," although these lean to putting the opposing spokesmen on the air on successive days instead of all at once. Bias is achieved by limiting the political universe from which spokesmen are chosen, not by slanting facts or telling the audience what the network may think the general situation is. Point of view is established by whom you interview and whom you don't, by whom you invite to take part in your round table or be on your panel of interrogators. What makes a Bill Moyers almost unique in his business is that he has a point of view.

Over the last twenty years print journalism has swung around to the broadcasters' common carrier, "balanced" approach. The Op-Ed page, unknown a generation ago, is a transliteration of routine TV practice to print. But it doesn't work as well, since writing must be, if not analytical, synoptic.

Only *The New York Times* and the very few other papers that think of themselves as journals of record are going to print the text of this conference. Sportswriters face this problem all the time. Sometimes they conquer it and sometimes it conquers them, but either way, they are aware that they are writing about an event many of their readers will have seen in its entirety. So sportswriters develop distinctive styles and points of view. They are selling the unique, the special, the different—which is why, in many communities, they possess the only bylines with public name recognition.

A sportswriter handling the press conference might have begun his story by talking about how the President had spent two days being prepped for it or how his fellow reporters—who were no less indispensible than Mr. Reagan in that little drama—memorized and rehearsed their questions. A sportswriter might have begun his piece with a mocking reminder of Mr. Reagan's appearance at a balanced budget amendment rally a few days previously. One way or another, he would have labored to avoid being the tube through which stale *pronunciamenti* would pass uncommented upon into the national cerebellum.

Which is why Howard Cosell will never be a member of the White House Press corps.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Welcome to a Late Arrival

The film world *is* mad. Any lingering doubt about it is wiped away by the belated arrival of a superb French film made in 1975 that hasn't even yet, at this writing, had a full-fledged release in the U.S. It's been shown only a few times in a few places while lesser foreign films get plastered around. For years I've been reading and hearing about Bertrand Tavernier's *The Judge and the Assassin*. Now, thanks to the Film Forum in New York—may it live and prosper—I've had a chance to see this fine work.

The Judge and the Assassin
(Libra Films)

Tavernier's previous films shown here, *The Clockmaker*, *Let Joy Reign Supreme*, *A Week's Vacation* (TNR, April 14) established him as a director of gripping seriousness, fluency, and range. *Let Joy Reign Supreme* was set in Regency France of the early eighteenth century and authentically lived there. *The Clockmaker*, based on a Simenon novel, and *A Week's Vacation* were set in present-day Lyons, Tavernier's birthplace. (*Spoiled Children*, the one disappointing Tavernier film I've seen, is set in Paris today.) *The Judge and the Assassin*, which was made just after *Let Joy Reign Supreme*, begins in 1893 and is set mainly in a town in the mountains of the Ardèche, not far from Lyons. The two main characters are the judge in this town, who is virtually the law incarnate, and a murderer, a homicidal sexual-religious maniac. The judge, played by Philippe Noiret, is a quintessential bourgeois, conservative, self-approving, proper; he lives with his mother and has a working-class mistress whom he visits occasionally and pays. The assassin, played by Michel Galabru, is a former army sergeant, working-class, about the judge's age, fiercely and rhetorically Catholic; he shot the woman he wanted to marry when she absolutely declined him—she had never encouraged him—then put two bullets in his own head. Both he and the young woman survived. He fled, to wander the roads of France. (Along with, we're told, 400,000 other vagabonds. This and some other societal notes are small, superfluous editorial intrusions.) From time to time, as his aching head and his sexual-religious delusions command him, he ravishes and murders girls and boys out in the countryside. The judge keeps track of these murders on a map; in time he manages to have the madman arrested and held for trial in his court.

Most of the film takes place between the arrest and the trial. The confrontations between judge and assassin are usually amicable, even with the madman's ravings. One of the film's subtleties is that, in some ways, the assassin insinuates an influence on the judge. (Once, after an interview, he hurries to his mistress and insists on sodomizing her, at her worktable, as the assassin had done to his victims.) But chiefly the judge is trying to prove that the assassin is not truly insane, is an anarchist pretending to be crazed. (Loathing for anarchists—apparently a collective term for all radicals—runs through the picture.) A friend of Noiret's, another judge who has just returned from Cochin-China (the old name for Vietnam!) reassures him: Galabru is poor, therefore will not be found insane. This proves to be true. We see neither the trial itself nor the execution—these are not Tavernier's interest—but the ranting madman is held responsible for his acts.

By the intensity of its focus, much less than through polemical comment, the film presses into the questions of privilege before the law; of anti-Semitism, virulent because of the Dreyfus case, which arises during this period; of class structure and political turbulence as dramatized in this town by the occasion of the assassin's trial. The screenplay is by Jean Aurenche and Tavernier. Aurenche, who was also Tavernier's collaborator on *Let Joy Reign Supreme*, is 37 years older than the director, which fact is a lovely *hommage* to the idea of continuity, besides being fruitful in itself. The writers selected an historical case, then worked it open the way cryptographers can find detailed information hidden under a period at the end of a sentence. Under the microscope of their sensitivities, Aurenche and Tavernier found in this case, or credibly inferred, large quarrels and antagonisms, ancient prides and fears.

Then Tavernier and his other colleagues took over. What fixes all the script's elements in place is, to begin with, the breathtaking recreation of the period. Tavernier showed splendid ability to do this in his eighteenth-century picture; here he has the same cinematographer, Pierre William Glenn, the same costume designer, Jacqueline Moreau, and an exceptional production designer, Antoine Roman. With them, Tavernier has again made a film of an historical texture that compares favorably with Feyder's *Carnival in Flanders* and Carné's *Children of Paradise*. There is no hint of recreation or research: lives are maintained, clothes and streets are inhabited, customs are followed through imaginative art. A

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Birgit Haas Must be Killed. Political thriller, with thrills and intelligence. French secret agents operate in Germany against a blonde terrorist. Philippe Noiret and Jean Rochefort once again substantial.

E. T., The Extra-Terrestrial. More homely heart-tugs than interstellar transcendence, but Steven Spielberg's film about a wee creature from Outer Space and three American kids has goodly good moments.

Lola. Not a remake of *The Blue Angel* but a spin-off, directed by Fassbinder in Movieland mode and excellently acted.

A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy. Woody Allen's turn-of-the-century country-weekend plot is bearably pleasant and pleasantly forgettable.

SK

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street singer and his harpist do a ballad about news of the day, not as a quaint folk rite but as the era's answer to hungers that are fed nowadays by electronic media. Institutions are laid bare as underpinnings of the surface prettinesses; grim though they look to us, prisons, hospitals, examining boards are seen as they are accepted by the people of the time, which is exactly the way similar institutions are viewed today—unsatisfactory, perhaps, but the best that is possible.

TAVERNIER works with no nostalgia for old Europe that Americans still hope to find when they visit and with no smug superiority about past brutalities of many kinds. Yet, humanitarian that he unquestionably is, he knows that something existed then—a community of the rich, a community of the poor—that has since been greatly diluted. He does not long for the return of heaven-ordained luxe for the privileged nor for the sympathetic fraternity of huddled peasants; but, like a true artist, he recognizes what all these people did for themselves within the limits of their time, conditioning, possibilities.

As for the acting, I feel that I do and don't owe apologies to Michel Galabru. I've disliked him in a number of farces and have admired him only once, as the love-smitten innkeeper in *A Week's Vacation*. All the while, his achievement as the assassin here has been waiting, finished, hidden from us by our mad film world. Galabru gives an absolutely shattering performance as the murdering, maniacally transfigured murderer, a performance that comes straight from the heart of Dostoevskian torment. Rasputin, it is said, sinned so that he could hate his sin and repent; this assassin sees his sin, when he can recognize it as such, as holy violence, which seems to bring him, through physical agony and wild exultation, closer to the Virgin Mary whom he adores. Perhaps I risk profanity, but I have seen little in film acting closer to the ecstasy that frequently bursts from Galabru other than some moments of Falconetti's ecstasy in Dreyer's film about Joan of Arc. (Unsurprisingly, at one moment, the madman compares himself to Joan.) Since, in my experience of his work, Galabru has done his best in Tavernier films, I conclude that this director sees this actor's possibilities better than other directors do and can help him more than others do.

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It is no slight to that excellent actor, Noiret, who is virtually a Tavernier regular, to say that his performance contains no surprises like Galabru's. In the happiest sense, Noiret does what I expected: he deepens an already well-written role with technical perfection, understanding, and compelling presence. The other principal character, the magistrate returned from Cochin-China, is played by Jean-Claude Brialy with an ethics of elegance, class prejudice, and expectation of sympathy from his equals. The details of his troubles in the East are not explored, but he has brought back with him a delicate young manservant who is probably a clue. Those troubles lead, near the end, to Brialy's suicide, which Tavernier handles with gentle irony. The camera moves slowly across his sumptuously furnished living room, to reveal him lying gracefully on a divan, a discreet red round spot on his temple, a small revolver lying near his hand, while, all through this camera glide, Brialy's gramophone plays Offenbach—music by a Jew, and German-born at that.

That near-casual camera movement is typical of the way the whole film seems to flow—with differing speeds—through crowded streets or following a steam-plumed locomotive around a turn or drawing back from a place on a mountainside to acknowledge the green universe. Only once is this feeling of flow drastically altered. Near the end, the red-headed woman whom Galabru loved and nearly killed meets the judge's mistress, another red-headed peasant woman. (The latter is played by Isabelle Huppert, since celebrated.) As their talk intensifies, the film cuts more and more sharply from one face to the other. The editing method stands out because it is used only here; and it underscores, through the meeting of these women, the mysterious bond of like and dislike between the assassin and the judge. I should note, too, that Tavernier has used Panavision for this film, which he handles as comfortably for intimate scenes as for vastness.

He also uses selective sound. For example, at one point Noiret and Huppert converse in the street while behind them a sort of carnival is going on. We barely hear the music and the people in the background. The device suggests the novelist's power of selection, whatever the environment.

The Judge and the Assassin is not a murder mystery: there is no mystery and we see very little violence. What we see, under the burning glass of epitome, is the result of centuries of egotism and hatred—in France, in Europe, therefore in that portion of the world that inherits from Europe. Even the insanity of the murderer is made a battleground for enmities and ambitions. The future is foreshadowed by the violence of attack—from clergy and others—on such creatures as Zola and anarchists. In the last sequence, after the assassin has been executed and the judge expects to advance politically thereby, we see Noiret on the platform at a meeting of a royalist association—the slogan "Everything national is ours" on a banner behind him—listening to himself being praised. Anarchists burst in, red flag and all. Noiret and his mother flee into the street and hide in a nook in front of a poster advertising a newspaper that claims to be the most anti-Semitic of all. Which is where we leave the film. But the film does not leave us.

Robert Brustein On Theater

Festival Fever

Summer is the season for the international theater festival, when winter-locked companies get the chance to stretch their limbs in foreign territories, and tourists the opportunity to combine daytime sightseeing with nightly theater-going. The international festival is not an indigenous American theater event, though the city of Denver started one this summer. Here the word is usually preempted by individual summer theaters (the New York Shakespeare Festival, the American Shakespeare Festival, the Williamstown Festival Theater) eager to have their shows associated with a "festive" holiday atmosphere. For the festival concept requires two things not normally found in our culturally primitive, art-pinched land: respect for the ongoing work of permanent companies, as opposed to scattershot commercial hits, and generous government sponsorship. Both of these key elements are abundant abroad, however, where ambitious theater festivals are now taking place throughout the Orient, South America, and the Mideast, as well as in virtually every nation of Europe.

I've just returned from Avignon, one of the festivals to which my own company was invited this summer; it was an exhilarating trip. This ancient town in the South of France, situated on the banks of the Rhone, is the site of numerous Roman and medieval artifacts, including the famous *pont* of the children's song (more a piece of sculpture than a bridge, since only half of it is standing), a marvelously preserved encircling wall, and the palaces and cathedrals of the popes who resided in this *cité des papes* after temporarily abandoning Rome in the thirteenth century. Although there is a municipal theater in the center of town, most festival activity occurs inside the courtyards of such buildings, on wooden scaffoldings that provide temporary seating and a stage. This testifies to an extraordinary faith in the benignity of the climate, which is mostly justified. It rarely rains in Avignon. The only enemy of performance is the mistral.

The mistral is a wind that comes from the north, blowing with mighty force down the Rhone, customarily lasting for three, six, or nine days (nobody can explain why the sequence comes in threes). When the mistral is blowing, the audience huddles in chilled misery trying to hear the voices of actors above the wailing of the implacable wind, and watching the scenery being shredded and whipped by forty-mile-an-hour gusts. An epic eight-hour production of *The Possessed* by a Paris company consisted of a series of doors and windows that the mistral turned into a wrecked construction site, and our own production of *Sganarelle* had to be performed on a bare stage after the wind not only knocked over the set in the courtyard of the Faculté des Sciences but also pulled down an antique piece of stone masonry to which it had been lashed.

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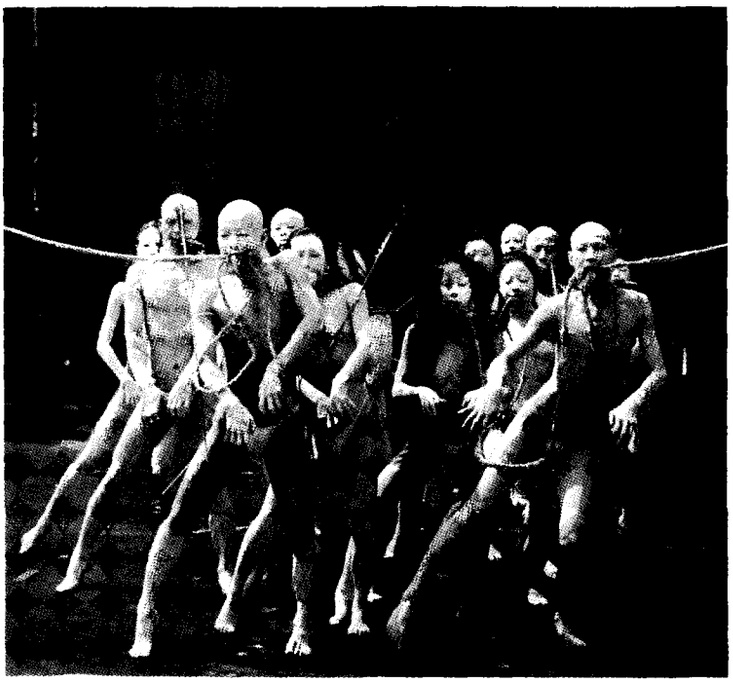
There are usually seven or eight companies performing each night in Avignon, along with an even larger number of off-festival events. The central square, the Place de L'Horloge, is alive with activity twenty-four hours a day, being the site of innumerable mimes, musicians, magicians, mountebanks, actors, acrobats, and political demonstrators, all of whom perform free for mobs of people sitting in the outdoor cafés or loitering in the streets. Most of these acts are awful—someone offered a prize to the person who could bag the most mimes with a shotgun—but they testify to the magnetic power of the festival in attracting those with theatrical ambitions. The city also attracts many young people, drawn there in part by the availability of drugs, whose dress and behavior recall Berkeley and Harvard Square in the 1960s; the Avignon summer seems like a hippie paradise until you come upon someone lying face down in the streets, or sitting forlornly on a corner, wearing a sign that says, *"J'ai faim."*



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE DAIRAKUDA KAN BY VAUCLUSE-MATIN

But the hunger for theater is the prime motivating appetite of the Avignon Festival, and it is satisfied in a variety of ways. I arrived too late to see Mnouchkine's productions of *Richard II* and *Twelfth Night*, which were generally well received, but aside from *The Possessed*, and our American Repertory Theater productions of Andrei Serban's *Sganarelle* and Lee Breuer's *Lulu*, the performances that made the most impact on the festival came from Japan. One was a marionette company playing at the Théâtre Municipal, the other a dance company across the river at the Cloître du Cimitière Chartreuse in Villeneuve.

This was the Dairakuda Kan, an ensemble that describes itself as a "movement of revolt" in opposition to such classical Japanese dance and theater styles as Kabuki and Noh. The revolt seems to be an outgrowth of the "student fever" of the late 1960s in Japan; it is not only aesthetic, it is also political, organized around a principle of rejection that includes all American cultural influences, not to mention the Japanese-American security pact. In repudiating both its own heritage and the culture of the West, the Dairakuda Kan is compelled to invent an entirely new imagery of grimace and gesture—presocial, futuristic, subterranean. Its major work, *Ankoku Butoh* or *The Dance of the Shades*, is a nonverbal piece performed to the accompaniment of a variety of musical forms; despite the manifesto, most of them are Western, including rock-and-roll, electronic sounds, and medieval ballads. Choreographed by its leader and chief dancer, Maro Akaji, *Ankoku Butoh* is a relentless, almost unbearable charade of agony and bondage, a choreographic fantasy inspired by the Hiroshima trauma, a dance essay on the character of survival after the blast.

Ankoku Butoh was played in Purchase and New York City last season, but I doubt if it ever had a more paradoxical historical setting than the Villeneuve Chartreuse, where, in a vast monastic courtyard looking out on a perspective of a medieval fortress, bulwarks of Occidental religious faith are assaulted by images of Oriental nihilism and despair. The abstract scenery consists of redwood panels and a single circular altar, filled with a white pasty substance. This might be the pancake makeup that the company wears on its first appearance, as the cadaverous dancers enter naked, holding a rope between their teeth, the men hairless and pierced with arrows, their fingers working like spastic plants. An electronic wail shatters your ears as they move together with painful slowness in a group display of torture and imprisonment. In subsequent scenes, the tiny female dancers, their pupils covered with red lenses, their mouths agape in a toothless parody of merriment, perform a charade of schoolchildren as abandoned, mutilated ghosts; a hefty servant in an incredibly dusty kimono swirls about the stage in circles, raising clouds of powder; four male dancers, black from head to foot except for gold designs painted on their faces, navigate around mobile gunnysacks that soon transform into little whitefaced girls wearing pink dresses and red hairbows. This grim parody of happy times is followed by a demonstration of the death of the gods (I was reminded of a similar sequence in the Auden-Bernstein ballet, *The Age of Anxiety*), where Maro Akaji himself, wearing a huge black wig and walking laboriously on mammoth stilts, is gradually reduced in size and stature until he collapses in ruins on the floor.

The Dairakuda Kan is wonderfully disciplined and original, but the evening is so remorseless, so monochromatic in its grotesque vision of the nuclear future that it eventually relinquishes its force. It is the mission of Dairakuda Kan to obliterate all of our hopes about subsequent generations, and for a three-hour period the company succeeds in this grim task, but it pays an aesthetic price, and even its relentless purpose is eventually controverted by the balmy atmosphere of southern France. One must respect these images of the Hiroshima trauma, but it is impossible not to acknowledge at the same time the pure starry vault under which this vision is enacted—the sweet air, the grace of the architecture, the happy crowds, the bustling streets, the whole intoxicating world of Avignon that offers such rich pleasures to the senses and the imagination.

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APPLE-PIE AUTHORITARIANISM?

Post-Conservative America: People, Politics and Ideology in a Time of Crisis by Kevin P. Phillips

(Random House, 258 pp., $14.50)

The New Right Papers edited by Robert W. Whittaker

(St. Martin's Press, 256 pp., $12.95)

I cannot remember a time when political commentators were not discovering a New Right. It has been over a quarter of a century since Daniel Bell, Richard Hofstadter, David Riesman, Nathan Glazer, Talcott Parsons, Peter Viereck, and Seymour Martin Lipset produced, amidst the ebbing tide of McCarthyism, the essays collected in *The New American Right*. Enlarged and renamed *The Radical Right*, the book was republished in 1963. A year later, the Goldwater nomination was said to signal the capture of one of the two major parties by that radical right. Goldwater went down to defeat but the hydra lived on. Here was George Wallace romping in *Democratic* primaries and union hard hats breaking up antiwar demonstrations and Spiro Agnew rousing the Silent Majority. And much talk of backlash, backlash that never quite materialized as expected but came, instead, on little cat feet.

From Coughlin to Falwell, there are striking continuities in this radical right. Parents of Catholic new right activists, writes Paul Weyrich in *The New Right Papers*, "were often faithful listeners to the radio broadcasts through the 1930s and 40s of Father Charles Coughlin." Weyrich notes intervening stages as well: "a debt to Joseph McCarthy must also be acknowledged"; "the seeds of the contemporary New Right were sown by the Goldwater campaign." Other contributors to this volume give ample testimony to the place of the Wallace campaigns. "To some measure," states Kevin Phillips in his map of the same territory, the new right "is an extension of the Wallace movement."

Nor has there ever been much doubt about the new right's causes, despite the shifts over time among its leading issues: Communism, race, big government, sex. Its abiding grievance has always been moral and cultural rather than economic. What it believed to be a self-evident moral code was under attack. A tight fabric of values was coming unraveled, and the fault was not that fabric's own weaknesses (or, for that matter, its potential for change and enlargement) but the pernicious effects of an alien ideology. Variously termed liberalism, humanism, pragmatism, socialism, collectivism, this enemy was both deadly and essentially foreign to the community the new right saw itself as defending. Accordingly it deserved no quarter, no "hiding behind" the Bill of Rights, for example. Government powers might be restricted (welfare, affirmative action, economic regulation) or expanded (censorship, FBI surveillance, congressional investigations), the controlling criterion being usefulness in the war against liberalism, a.k.a. humanism, socialism, etc. Claiming to represent the mass of ordinary people against an establishment of wealth as well as of intellect and culture, the new right wields the symbols and rhetoric of democracy. In this sense it is "populist."

Liberals have never failed to catch a whiff of fascism in all this, and I think liberals are right. There may have been much that was self-serving in the notions of "status politics" and "authoritarian personality" once favored by theorists like Hofstadter and Lipset. But Kevin Phillips, who is no liberal, sees parallels between the new right and the European proto-fascisms of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Phillips warns of "apple-pie authoritarianism."

There is little in the testimony of the new rightists themselves, at least those represented in *The New Right Papers*, to ease liberal fears. One contributor refers to "the alleged besetting sin of the new right, oversimplification," only to grasp it to his bosom: "A little simplification . . . is just what we need. . . . Great issues are simple ones." William A. Rusher, publisher of *National Review*, allows as how "the most important contribution of the New Right . . . is neither theoretical nor technical, but emotional." It is, in fact, "sheer passion." This, says Rusher, sounding a little like a man who feels duty-bound to put something on the record in as nice a way as possible, "has its negative as well as its positive aspects."

But oversimplification and sheer passion are terms too mild to characterize the dominant spirit of this book. Even vehemence falls short. These essays resemble political thought the way lynch laws resemble criminal justice. Hyperbole and hearsay run wild. There is no consistent principle from essay to essay—sometimes not even within single essays—except hatred of liberalism. I, for one, am far from finding liberalism entirely lovable; indeed, I find myself on the same side of some important public issues as the new right, e.g., I believe that the 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion was a moral and constitutional disaster. Like anyone else who has ever felt the pressure of liberal conformity or the bite of liberal dogmatism, I cannot be totally without sympathy for some of the new right's complaints. But no amount of sympathy can obscure the coarseness, in fact the brutality, of thought that, with some honorable exceptions, marks these essays.

The problem, then, has never been recognizing the existence or the character of the new right, but gaining some perspective on it. How widely and deeply, beyond the ranks of its hardcore adherents, does its appeal run? How much of its impact is limited by the buccaneer capitalism and anti-union politics that, populist rhetoric notwithstanding, it ultimately endorses? How much is countered simply by most Americans' commonsense suspicion of zealotry? To what extent is the periodic to-do about the new right a distraction from underlying economic conflicts, a smoke screen for corporate lobbying, a snare for the left? What elements in the new right's case have a validity that will not be denied, or a perilousness that must not be ignored? The specter of the new right has been raised by the center seeking to move the left toward moderation—and by the left seeking to move the center toward militancy. Which makes more sense?

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Neither of these books helps provide the needed perspective on these questions. *The New Right Papers* freely tosses around generalizations about the new right inclinations of the working class, the middle class, the common man, with only a smattering of evidence and with determined neglect of the contrary data. One expects better from Kevin Phillips, and gets it, too, but not much better.

Since 1968, when he served on the brain trust John Mitchell had assembled for the Nixon campaign, Phillips has been chief intellectual custodian of the "Southern Strategy" for turning the Republican Party into the majority party once again. "Sun Belt" and "New Right," he tells us (several times in fact), were terms he introduced into current political parlance. In 1968 Phillips told Garry Wills (as reported in *Nixon Agonistes*) that a kind of populist conservatism—centered on race, crime, and other "social issues"—had been building for a long time, only to be derouted by "accidents" like low voter turnout in 1948, the belief that Eisenhower was a unique phenomenon, the Kennedy assassination that assured Goldwater's defeat in 1964. Phillips argued that the Southern Strategy would finally prove itself with a sweeping Nixon victory in 1972. Indeed that victory turned out to be so sweeping as to disguise the fact that Phillips was mostly correct. But then another "accident" intervened—Watergate. Watergate blocked the consolidation of a new conservative Republican majority for the rest of the 1970s. And though Reagan's victory appeared to demonstrate that the great realignment was finally at hand, Phillips has his doubts. Too many problems and frustrations have festered since 1972. The world is caught up in an inflationary "price revolution" such as it has not known since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—in other words, an entirely unprecedented challenge for the American party system and its mechanics of realignment. At the same time, the new conservative leadership of the Republican Party seems trapped in a set of policies based on nostalgia for the harmonies of the Coolidge era and unlikely, says Phillips, to serve the economic interests or contain the antiestablishment angers of the lower-middle-class new right "populists."

Phillips acknowledges the array of forces that could move a postconservative America to the left. Not only is the economically pinched North primed for "a backlash against Sun Beltism," but the Sun Belt itself retains lingering Democratic allegiances and a fondness for federal aid in overcoming its numerous problems. Poor people, the elderly, recent immigrants (mostly Hispanics), and other minority groups are being stirred to defend the government services and transfer payments crucial to them. Culturally conservative workers may recoil from policies that tolerate unemployment and redistribute income to the wealthy, while a growing number of women, professionals, and "cosmopolitans" are offended by the new right's cultural agenda. Phillips records all this but takes it no further. For him, liberalism, economically and culturally, is a definitive failure. The immediate future of postconservative America will be settled between various brands of rightism.

This is only one of the points at which Phillips's argument is disappointingly slapdash. Documenting America's "two-decade breakdown," for example, he presents statistics on declining productivity, "exploding" income-tax collections, and on the rising cost of living. Not only are the statistics deceptive on several grounds—absolute sums instead of appropriate percentages, apparently unadjusted for inflation, etc.—they do not even reveal the pattern Phillips descrys. On these indicators the "liberal" 1960s do as well as, or better than, the "conservative" 1950s or the postliberal "moderate" 1970s. Nonetheless, Phillips has no hesitation in ascribing the nation's ills to "liberal sociology" and "liberal economics." Any number of recent books, by centrists, liberals, and democratic socialists, have covered the same ground, but they analyze the causes of "breakdown" in far more detail and apportion the blame in a much less ideologically simplified fashion.

Here, as elsewhere, one gets the impression that Phillips *knows* he is being slapdash. In discussing the religious component of the new right, he alludes to the important distinction between fundamentalists and evangelicals, and then goes on to ignore it. At several points he refers to a Lou Harris poll that attributed a decisive role in the 1980 elections to the "followers of the so-

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called Moral Majority TV preachers." In actuality, Harris defined whether people belonged to the "moral majority" (lower case) by asking, "Do you belong to, or attend in person, watch on television, listen on radio, or receive literature from any evangelical church or preacher?"—a question certain to accumulate a much larger group than the "followers" of Moral Majority (upper case) leader Jerry Falwell and his TV allies. Did Phillips, whose specialty is public opinion and polling data, really miss such an egregious error, or just prefer to overlook it?

Post-Conservative America is a disturbingly ambiguous book, a quality reinforced by its frequent sloppiness. It is ambiguous in particulars: Phillips recounts the right-wing theories that Watergate was a liberal plot and Vietnam a stab in the back, not to endorse such notions, he insists, but merely to demonstrate their political potency. I think he is being disingenuous. Whether or not he believes these theories are true, his account is calculated to guarantee them a longer life.

More important, the book is ambiguous in its overall thrust. At some moments, Phillips is merely warning against easy interpretations of the Reagan victory: the 1980s will be full of surprises. "The changes wrought in America's politics and political institutions are likely to exceed anyone's expectations." "The big question is whether our most recent national trauma is a prelude to even greater political upheaval ahead." At other times, and more dramatically, Phillips seems to be warning against a specific danger latent in the new volatility: "a soft kind of authoritarian politics"; "a politics of cultural despair"; "a politics of national mythology, Social Darwinism and charismatic leadership." This danger was stressed in a kind of précis of *Post-Conservative America* that Phillips wrote for *The New York Review of Books*.

Yet Phillips's attitude toward this authoritarianism is by no means clear cut. Although he believes the frustrations now pushing us toward an authoritarian solution stem, at least in large part, from the effect of Watergate in preventing a natural consolidation of a conservative majority, Phillips also concludes that

> for the New Republican Majority to have successfully entrenched itself during the years 1973 to 1976 would have required a substantial semiauthoritarian escalation of the Imperial Presidency

by Nixon. If Reaganomics is to work, it will have "to harness low-middle-income populist constituencies on behalf of upper-income groups and the corporate sector" by "employing a larger set of cultural and nationalistic themes . . . work, faith, family and flag." Yet if Reaganomics doesn't work, "the Administration would be obliged to intensify its appeal to populist lower-middle-income conservatives with provocative social and foreign-policy themes." Phillips's own proposals for institutional reform, rather than promising to ward off the dangers of authoritarian, plebiscitary politics, seem only calculated to increase them. The current separation of powers is obsolete:

> Government power is too diffused to make difficult and necessary economic and technical decisions. . . . Power at the federal level must be augmented, and lodged for the most part in the executive branch.

Phillips appears troubled by the prospect of "apple-pie authoritarianism," but whatever he lights upon as a possibility of forestalling it looks extremely similar. There is no way out, "no going back," he says, stealing a phrase from the left. I had the queasy feeling of witnessing one of those sessions in which someone instructs his hearers in the science of torture under the guise of preparing them to resist it.

Both these books converge on a hankering for a plebiscitary Caesarism. Phillips would evidently prefer a moderate dose, partly as vaccination against the more virulent strain. Samuel T. Francis, legislative assistant to Senator John East, expresses no such reservations in *The New Right Papers*. The new right, according to Francis, represents dynamic rising classes—"Middle American Radicals" and entrepreneurial "Sunbelt interest"—that are struggling to seize power from the established post-New Deal elite. In that struggle, the New Right should pursue a "Caesarist strategy," using the Presidency to "cut through the intractable establishment of bureaucracy and media" that stands in the way of "the latent dynamism of the MAR-Sunbelt social forces."

> The intermediate institutions of contemporary America—the bureaucracy, the media, the managerial hierarchies of the mass unions and corporations, the universities, the urban conglomerates [and on the previous page Francis lists Congress and the courts as well]—are . . . the power preserves of the entrenched elite whose values and interests are hostile to the traditional American ethos and which is a parasitical tumor on the body of Middle America. These structures should be leveled or at least radically reformed, and only the Presidency has the power and resources to begin the process.

Reading this, one thinks ruefully of those ex-liberal intellectuals who have chosen to hold hands with the new right in hopes of protecting intermediate institutions from "liberal statism."

What is finally so dispiriting about these books is their exaltation of power. Both books are power plays in an immediate sense—shots fired across the bow of the Reagan Administration warning it, in different ways, not to take its success for granted. Beyond that, there is much talk of energy, vitality, muscle, exuberance, buoyancy, frontier spirit, vigor, and dynamism, contrasted, to be sure, with liberal decadence and exhaustion. But all this energy, vitality, etc. is divorced from any larger vision. That may be the natural outcome of Phillips's chosen stance as a detached political analyst. But even in the impassioned advocacy of the new rightists, one finds no compelling picture of what is decent, caring, and valuable in the society they are so determined to defend, only a burning drive to triumph over those they consider its enemies. Perhaps the allure of the new right for Phillips is explained by another statement he made to Garry Wills in 1968. "The whole secret of politics," he said, is "knowing who hates who." These are books rich in "who hates who."

PETER STEINFELS

Peter Steinfels is executive editor of *Commonweal* and author of the *The Neoconservatives* (Simon and Schuster/Touchstone Books).

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To Cap The Volcano

The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics Before And After Hiroshima by Michael Mandelbaum

(Cambridge University Press, 283 pp., $29.95)

We have lived in the nuclear age for thirty-seven years now—a span of time that used to be known as a generation—and we have alternated between dreading the prospect of nuclear annihilation and hoping that somehow the nightmare we had conjured up was just that—a bad dream from which we would awake. Not surprisingly, our consciousness of the consequences of the nuclear revolution has waned or waxed as our relations with our nuclear adversary, the Soviet Union, have improved or worsened. Nations, it seems, continue to behave as they have since the age of Pericles. As the likelihood of war grows we arm, as peace looms we seek to disarm. And during both cycles, there are those who warn against the folly of arming even as our adversary grows in strength and those who accuse the disarmers of appeasement. But this time it is different; a nuclear war can mean the end of history—no past, no future, nothing.

In his probing and beautifully written study of international politics after Hiroshima, Michael Mandelbaum, who teaches international relations at Harvard University, provides no glib answers on how we can escape the consequences of the world we have created and inherited. Instead, he gives us something more honest—an understanding of why we behave as we do. We can ask no more from historians and political scientists. We should ask at least that from our philosophers and kings.

As Mandelbaum sees it, an anarchical international system has persisted for twenty-five hundred years. There has *not been, nor is there likely to be, any* single supreme authority to enforce rules of behavior over individual states that jockey for power. A state of lawlessness prevails. From time to time, of course, great states have tried to put an end to anarchy by establishing universal predominance—pax Romana—and the ideal of Christendom was to provide rules of behavior among all peoples. Universal domination either by church or state, however, meets with resistance; the anarchic nature of the system undermines the very impulse to control anarchy. In recent memory the United Nations was just such an attempt to end anarchy and so abolish war.

As we know, this too failed. Moreover, the three great modern revolutions—the Napoleonic with its mobilization of the total nation for war, the mechanical revolution with its emphasis on new technology able to cause vast loss of life (finally most evident in World War I), and the nuclear revolution, which renders absolute war a war of annihilation—have not changed the essential nature of the anarchical international system and thus the continuing possibility of war. Anarchy, Mandelbaum is correct to point out, "produces insecurity, because there is no equivalent of the state to guarantee safety," as there is in domestic politics.

To cope with anarchy in international politics, the nation-state—or, in ancient Greece and Renaissance Italy, the city-state—has depended on a balance of power. The balance of power naturally responds to the anarchical system so as "to prevent the domination of a single power." With the development of the balance of power in modern times, the eighteenth century became a kind of golden age in which the balance seemed the very image of the divine clockmaker whose pendulum swings at just the right measure. Frederick the Great put it aptly when he wrote that "when the policy and the prudence of the princes of Europe lost sight of the maintenance of a just balance among the dominant powers, the constitution of the whole body resents it." Such a condition results in "disorder and con-

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fusion," and carries with it the danger of "the most disastrous revolutions." In the eighteenth century, the favored instrument to maintain the balance was war. The balance of power, as practiced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, has favored diplomacy as a way of maintaining itself.

No longer is the balance, as it was in the post-Newtonian world, a laissez-faire balance; rather, it has become a managed balance. This has been due to the three modern revolutions Mandelbaum cites, for the loss in life and treasure after Napoleon was simply too great to allow states to act by themselves solely on the basis of their own interests; instead, the states acted with the notion "of the interest of the system as a whole," in order to make it work more smoothly. Since 1945, of course, the balance has been bipolar rather than multipolar; like the managed system that was delineated at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, what finally emerged, then as now, was "a failed version of collective security." Unfortunately, the managed system of the nineteenth century ended in a catastrophic war that destroyed European power; the managed system of the nuclear age cannot afford to fail—yet we live under the threat of that failure.

It is the possibility of failure that forces American Presidents from Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan, and Soviet dictators from Stalin to Brezhnev, to negotiate ways to control the arms race, or, in another sense, to control the consequences of anarchy. Yet despite this, the arms race has not been curbed; the contrary is true. Mandelbaum finds little to hope for from this quarter, since both superpowers have found it generally "prudent to err on the side of caution and to risk possessing too many rather than too few nuclear weapons." Of course, some good has come out of negotiations: the test-ban treaty in 1963 has at least made the environment safer to breathe; because of the SALT I arms control treaty of 1972 some systems, like the antiballistic missile system, have not been built, and this has saved vast sums of money. But, unfortunately, the "obsolescence, or at least the familiarity of a weapon seemed to be a necessary condition for agreements to limit it." No one really needs atmospheric testing to improve nuclear arsenals, and multiple warheads, able to penetrate defense systems, were just starting to be deployed in the 1970s.

This, then, is the way we live now. We still operate under a balance of power, with alliances subservient to the balance. Nor is there any evidence of the possibility of world government that would render such a system obsolete and yet preserve the peace. Arms control measures seem almost Sisyphean. Yet not to try to cap the volcano, in McGeorge Bundy's phrase, would mean we had given up all hope of trying to prevent nuclear annihilation—each arms control agreement leading ineluctably to the invention and production of new weapons of ever greater destructive force.

THE IDEA of nuclear annihilation is finally incompatible with the Western idea of history. For our history, as Mandelbaum points out, is linear. Particularly in the modern age, history is progressive. The end of history in the West is the transition to paradise; it is not compatible "with the idea of the end as simply the end, as seems likely in the event of nuclear war." We are therefore unable to imagine the end of the world, and, ironically, this inability of the Western imagination to "encompass nuclear annihilation because of the Western concept of time" may prove essential to our survival. Insofar as our linear view of time means we cannot integrate nuclear annihilation into the Western cultural forms for coping with the apocalypse, Mandelbaum shows us with devastating clarity that "what makes nuclear war possible also makes it unthinkable."

Michael Mandelbaum's *The Nuclear Revolution* offers neither panacea nor despair for the human condition. What it does offer is clarity, and in clarity there is wisdom, and in wisdom there is hope.

JAMES CHACE

James Chace is managing editor of *Foreign Affairs* and the author of *Solvency: The Price of Survival*, which will be published in paperback by Vintage this month.

TRICYCLE

Behind the frisking, farting tail
of our young mare, Nellie, we were riding
the seven-mile stretch of dirt road
from the "burg" back home to our village.

Wedged between my knees was the tricycle,
hatched at last, shiny-real, from the page
which I had kept warm all winter long
in the Sears and Roebuck catalogue.

My father was slapping the reins against
Nellie's rump, and when the hurried
wheels bounced in and out of the caked-mud
ruts, he would yell, Watch out! There it goes
over the side! And I would grab
the handlebars and hang on hard.
My mother said, Will, stop teasing
the child like that. But what did she know.

The enormous sunlight of that whole summer
held still and firm, I thought, all around me
while I pedalled my three wheels up
and down our brick sidewalks so fast I saw
the spokes spin into one flashing blur.

Even so, I could fly no faster than the Twentieth
Century Limited which I was driving
at full-throttle, whistling my mile-a-minute
disdain at boy-size towns like ours.

Yet I was straining toward that orgasmic
peak in time where speed explodes
in a tower of fire, and beginnings and ends
of rails and sidewalks melt into one moment.

My own children were clinging to my back
like laboratory monkeys. They stared
ahead in terror at speed as pure
as instant sunlight, knowing they could not
let go of their primitive father-flesh.

ERNEST SANDEEN

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I Lost It In The Hot Tub

The American Heritage Dictionary Second College Edition

(Houghton Mifflin, 1,536 pp., $13.95)

The strengths of this edition of a popular college dictionary published in 1969 remain those of the first edition: its liberal provision of synonyms and of notes on the touchy questions of usage. To illustrate the former, here is the note under "qualm."

> Synonymns: *qualm, scruple, compunction, misgiving, reservation.* These nouns denote varying degrees of uncertainty felt by a person about his judgment in taking action. *Qualm* can be as slight as a feeling of uneasiness or as strong as a queasy sensation in its implication of self-doubt. *Scruple* adds the idea of conscience. *Compunction* increases the importance of conscience in deciding the rightness or wrongness of one's acts. *Misgiving* implies mistrust or misapprehension as to one's ability, or fear that one has made a mistake. *Reservation* also connotes doubt about the fitness or correctness of an action, but refers to a rather well-defined limiting condition that one has arrived at.

Reading down that paragraph, one discovers the fine geology of a word, a feeling, a moral psychology. The example is typical of the editors' excellent literary judgment.

The notes on usage—which represent the consensus of a large panel of worthies—are lucid and, in the main, on the side of the angels. Thus a "vast majority" of the judges rejects "finalize" and "prioritize" in formal writing, and a "large majority" disdains the use of "impact" as a verb. The judges declare that "personality" may not be substituted for "celebrity" in such phrases as "a famous TV personality." That is one change for the better since 1969, when 62 percent approved it. The judges permit "will" instead of "shall'; in the first person future, and, in most cases, "would" in place of "should." You may "teach grade school" in this edition, but not be a "sometime teacher." You may "try to face tomorrow," not "try and face" it. You may begin a sentence with "and," use either a singular or plural verb with "data" (the judges split 50/50), and be loose in using "each other" and "one another," provided that you never write "disinterested" for "uninterested," "borrowed off" instead of "borrowed from," or use the verb "quote" in place of the noun "quotation." Shamefully, the judges throw up their hands over "hopefully," reasoning, by analogy to "mercifully," that it is acceptable; though they do add the caveat that this contentious usage should be avoided for the sake of "civility."

The new words in this edition form a topography of the fads and follies of the 1970s: hot tub, honcho, hospice, interface, loony bin, op ed page, put down, preppie, redline, bummer, body bag, closet queen, retiree, new wave—it goes on like that. "Make" gained a new sense—"make the scene." And so did "straight": in 1969, it meant heterosexual; today, one who does not take drugs. Thirteen years ago the entry under "man" was what it had been since Dr. Johnson's dictionary. Now the definition is followed by a long usage note telling you what you can't do with man. "Black" has also grown self-conscious; but, puzzingly, "Negro" and "Negress" are here, so to speak, straight. Alexander Solzhenitzyn leaves his mark on the language with "zek," but where, one wonders, is "Gulag"?

This dictionary has a bad case of the national amnesia: it might have been compiled by Henry "history is more or less bunk" Ford. Entries for the Missouri Compromise and the Maginot Line were in the first edition, but not this one. The first edition gave the country Quisling betrayed; not this one. The editors don't know the origin of "over the hump," which may offend veterans of the China-Burma-India theater; and they stumble in identifying the Progressive Party of 1912 as "primarily agrarian." They include an entry for Margaret Mitchell, but only the first edition reveals that she wrote *Gone With the Wind*. Apparently in 1969 a student needed to know what the New Eco-

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nomic Policy was, for the editors included it. It's gone now. To make way for the likes of "dating bar," which only an idiot would have to look up, the editors have punched these little holes in the past. What you see out the other side is emptiness.

A new feature is the 57-page section of biographical entries (in the first edition the names were mixed in with the words), which has the strangest lacunae. What criteria, for example, could have admitted Barbara Walters and Gloria Steinem, but not Dick Cavett and Johnny Carson? Suspicion grows that a mindless affirmative action of quantity is at work when one finds an entry for Elizabeth Taylor, but none for Richard Burton. Suspicion deepens when one lights on entries for Margaret Chase Smith and Ella Grasso. Incidentally, these women are identified only as American politicians, which makes this dictionary useless for settling two inevitable trivia questions. The editors include Joe McCarthy twice—under his name and under the ism—but omit Gene, who was in the first edition. Lionel Trilling is here, but not Diana. Edmund Wilson, but not Alfred Kazin. Mark Van Doren, but not Phillip Rahv. Beneath a pile of Howes, one is happy to see Irving, b. 1920 Am. critic, but why do the editors keep the number of homers Hank Aaron hit a secret? I. F. Stone and James Reston are here, with nicknames, but not Carey MacWilliams, or Herbert Croly, a founder of this magazine. (But Freda Kirchwey is here.) Sholem Aleichem is here, but not I. L. Peretz. Nor is the hero of Jutland here. Nor Clyde. Nor even Warren.

JACK BEATTY

SCHOOLS FOR A REPUBLIC

The Radical Bourgeoisie: The Ligue d'enseignement and the Origins of the Third Republic 1866-1885 by Katherine Auspitz

(Cambridge University Press, 237 pp., $29.50)

Is liberalism picking itself up off the floor? Are the battered brigades of social democracy regrouping? Would the bourgeoisie jog to the barricades to defend its constitutional right to godless schooling? Does the reviled apparatus of the government still have a role to play in regulating social equity? These, and other old-fashioned radical questions, are prompted by the timely appearance of Katherine Auspitz's spirited and challenging book. Though written with a zest that belies its weight of learning, this is a scholarly account of the campaign waged by nineteenth-century French republicans to secure a public system of free, compulsory, elementary education. It is also a communiqué from the front line in a continuing war about the respective demarcation zones of civil and religious beliefs. And in this quarrel, Dr. Auspitz makes no pretense at historical dispassion. Her book is an unabashed and wholehearted defense of Jean Macé and the militant *ligueurs* whose determination led to the famous victory of the *loi Ferry* exactly a century ago; a manifesto on behalf of the virtues of secular democracy.

Such an allegiance is itself refreshing in its ideological innocence and assertiveness. Not so long ago, a book title so apparently oxymoronic would have raised sniggers from right and left alike. To have suggested that there was such a thing as an autonomous bourgeois culture would have been to invite incredulity. Was not this "class that dared not speak its name" pathetically sandwiched between an old elite it yearned to join, and a work force of whom it remained terrified? Such a culture, it followed, was necessarily an ersatz product: derivative, vulgarized, gimcrack, and shallow. A process of flayers of the bourgeoisie—Gautier, Balzac, Flaubert, de Goncourt—outdid one another in castigating the middle classes for vices (avarice, gluttony, sexual hypocrisy) which in their own lives they so fully exemplified. At the sentimental flank of the class, it was said by their denigrators, were massed the troop of professional bores and gasbags—journalists, academics, politicians of the stump—whose fetishistic obsession with the Great Revolution of 1789 was matched only by their blue funk at its unfinished social business.

UP UNTIL very recently much of this stereotype had congealed in an historical orthodoxy. Only lately have there been signs of an entirely different kind of bourgeois history; one less concerned to deliver verdicts on the class war, and dedicated instead to better understanding the character of its social identity. This has not been done by taking up cudgels again in defense of some ancient infamy, but rather by looking at process and practice, habit and behavior. Pioneering studies on the conduct of family life, sexual relations, business enterprises and social expenditures, cultural taste and literary inclinations are beginning to appear that do not set out to vindicate the obligatory prior assumption that these will all turn out to be debased, repressed, and philistine. Katherine Auspitz has gone one stage further in presuming to treat their political beliefs as though they amounted to a coherent ideology of republican democracy and one, moreover, that was more than a bolt-hole from social revolution.

By daring to treat the radical bourgeois as though they actually meant what they said, Dr. Auspitz has not only rescued them from the prosecuting historicism of the left; she has also resisted the iconoclastic skepticism made fashionable by the influential history of Theodore Zeldin. She has some sharp things to say about his hyperrelativism which, so far from taking the bourgeoisie as a monolithic class, goes so far in the opposite direction as to dissolve their identity into a fine mist of random social impressions and utterances. Against historicism and relativism alike, Dr. Auspitz offers a disarmingly straightforward but persuasive view of what it was the "radical bourgeois"—from Michelet to Ferry—wanted: a political democracy in which priests were prohibited from social tasks, where a secular morality would provide the cement of fraternity; a republic of harmonious families, unalienated workers, and engaged citizens. A sort of sans culottism without the tumbrils.

If all of Dr. Auspitz's enthusiasm is unable to avoid the impression that her

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ligueurs were a sanctimonious bunch, that, after all, is entirely in keeping with their Rousseauite pedigree, in which the school was to be the temple as well as the nursery of the new citizen. Educational history has rarely been the stuff to set the pulse racing, and political historians have been apt to treat the bickering of French protagonists with bemused condescension. Dr. Auspitz rightly refuses to treat this history as a pedantic footnote to the grander themes of political life, seeing it instead as a debate that went to the heart of French social life. During the French Revolution there were few of its luminaries who were not, at some stage, preoccupied with education, both of children and adults. Talleyrand, Sieyès, Condorcet, and Robespierre all presided over the interminable deliberations of the Committee of Public Instruction, and all seemed to see the new era as a prime opportunity to forge the heroic citizen. Later, in the early nineteenth century, a series of politicians with their roots in the university and school system—most notably Guizot—attempted a more modest scale of reform. But by the middle of the nineteenth century the duration of the debate was in sharp contrast to the magnitude of achievement. Guizot's feeble measure of 1833 looked paltry not merely beside the grand designs of the Revolution but also when set against much more substantial legislation enacted in the first decade of the century in countries like Holland, Prussia, and Switzerland.

THE GREAT stumbling block, republicans contended, had all along been the recalcitrance of the Catholic Church. This was not altogether just. Under the revolution, legislators had been quick to abandon ambitious schemes for the mass instruction of the young when it became apparent that there was neither adequate personnel nor funds. Without the Church fathers (at whose cassocks many of the revolutionaries had themselves been educated) that instruction would have been even more rudimentary than it already was. Moreover, the decision to concentrate secular resources not on mass literacy, but on creaming off an elite for the bureaucracy and the military, was one determined by the utilitarian desiderata of the Napoleonic state. It was true, however, that during the first half of the nineteenth century the Church had done its utmost to resist any encoachment on its domination of primary education, and that, with the passage of the *loi Falloux* in 1850, its obstruction seemed perpetuated. Dr. Auspitz locates the crucial break in its stranglehold in the later 1860s, when the rise of the Ligue coincided with, and was encouraged by, Victor Duruy, Napoleon III's anticlerical minister of education.

THIS PRAGMATIC continuity between the years of the liberal Empire and the later 1870s, when radical efforts were finally crowned with success, is just one of the valuable revisions offered in this book. Dr. Auspitz is also at pains to point out, however, that the major asset of the League was precisely that it did not owe its existence to official initiative, nor to some rarefied academic organization based in Paris. Her very best chapters show graphically just how deeply embedded in regional and provincial life the League became, to the extent that being a radical republican at all meant sympathizing with, and working for, the accomplishment of its objectives. And the ability to mobilize votes as well as goodwill itself depended on the emphatic decentralization of public life that was the hallmark of the Third Republic, notwithstanding the superficially imposing edifice of the centralized state.

Apart from the fruitful and incorrigible diversity of France, which served radicals so well in the Third Republic, there was another reason why the campaign of the League should have culminated in the achievement of 1882. Put most baldly, it is that in elementary education social meliorism can be most demonstrably successful. However much class-warrior historians are prone to see in schemes of educational improvement an insidious strategy to undermine working-class independence, the powerful urge to acquire the rudiments of literacy and numeracy has generally overwhelmed residual political suspicion. And in the French case, as indeed in the British earlier in the century, educational reform was the one area where middle-class good intentions coincided with working-class aspirations. So far from being an arena of social confrontation, each of the parties corresponded to their respective best images: the bourgeois radicals being paladins of secular opportunity, devotees of mass enlightenment—and the working class being eager beavers for hard work, determined instruction, and socially peaceful change.

This, then, is a cheerful book, with very little of the pallor of *mal du siècle* about it. The only thing to regret in it, (aside from a perfunctory index) is that Dr. Auspitz did not venture further down the byways and backwaters of provincial France toward those musty little schoolrooms which were the logical destination of all the League stood for. The figures who dominate her account are such pillars of rectitude, *pur et dur*, bristle-whiskered and starch-collared, that one occasionally yearns for the sounds of schoolboy rudeness. After all, the eventual reality within these republican temples, these "churches" of the new reality, was reassuringly mundane and profane: ink-incised oak desks, clumsy black smocks touched with that verdigris that seems to collect on serge and flannel, and, at the beginning and end of the school year, those ubiquitous rays of chalkdust caught in sunbeams.

SIMON SCHAMA

Simon Schama is a professor of history at Harvard University.

BRIEF REVIEWS

Red Sunset
by John Stockwell

(Morrow, 360 pp., $13.50)

The image of current-day Africa is dominated by figures like Idi Amin, the former dictator of Uganda: a hideous, ruthless, brutal, yet somehow comic figure, perfect for the covers of the newsmagazines and ideal as the prototype for fictional villains. This is the sort of African that Americans love to hate, the accidental symbol of a mysterious continent they are not about to understand—a continent of coups and wars, tribal hatred and starvation. To chip away at those stereotypes and still tell a candid story is no easy task; and to do so in an entertaining yet subtle way is almost impossible. Yet that is just what John Stockwell has done in his first novel, *Red Sunset*.

As it happens, this compelling tale of

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love and adventure is set in a part of east central Africa that has seen its share of coups, wars, and starvation—indeed, in a country, Burundi, where tribal hatred has been a major problem. (The aristocratic minority, the Tutsi, have prevailed over the Hutu majority only by killing tens of thousands of them; in Rwanda, just to the north, the Hutu have managed to dominate the Tutsi by the same method.) And there is plenty of unadulterated brutality here, especially whenever the scene turns to the world of Ngandu wa Ngandu, the Crocodile, the renegade Zairian army sergeant who frightens everyone and terrorizes primarily the innocent. Nonetheless, Stockwell's Africa is a place of great complexity, where good and evil are often hard to tell apart, where there is room for a vast range of emotions in the midst of intricate social and political processes. This is an Africa of astounding natural beauty, but it is not absurdly romanticized.

Stockwell is especially well qualified to write realistically of Africa. Born in Texas, he moved at the age of eight to the Belgian Congo (now Zaire), where his father was working on a hydroelectric plant. After college and military service, he spent six years in Africa working for the Central Intelligence Agency (including some time in Burundi), and later he was in charge of the CIA's covert operations during the civil war in Angola. It was the latter role that eventually became well known, when Stockwell resigned from the agency in 1977 and published *In Search of Enemies*, an exposé of the CIA's role in Africa and in the third world generally.

IN VIEW of his background, Stockwell might have been expected to produce a novel chronicling the skulduggery between the CIA and the KGB in the lonely outposts of the world. In fact he did, but his publisher talked him into eliminating the spy story that pitted East against West in favor of a love story that brings them together.

I don't know what Stockwell's spy story would have been like, but his love story is enchanting—and convincing. The heroine, Natalie Wilson, is a strong-willed Texan who left school early to marry a dashing young Vietnam veteran. He is sent to Africa by an American oil company. At their first post, in Nairobi, Natalie's life was exciting and creative; at the second, in Abidjan, things begin to crumble. By the time her husband is assigned to Bujumbura, he is an alcoholic, a philanderer, and a psychological wreck, and she agrees to move there only temporarily, long enough to figure out the most sensible future for herself and their two daughters. Even before she has had time to begin figuring, she has two fateful encounters: with Zyl Van Genoop, the South African who in this story runs Burundi's central bank; and with Alexis Kabin, a worldly, urbane, and sensitive Russian diplomat who is serving his own special kind of exile. Van Genoop tries to destroy her, and Kabin, in rescuing her, sweeps her off her feet. The device through which much of the tale unfolds is, of all things, chess.

BY FAR the most notable of Stockwell's achievements here is his excruciatingly accurate portrayal of expatriate—especially American expatriate—life in Africa. His American characters are impatient with the world they are living in and bored with their own increasingly narrow lives. Their idealism has gone almost completely sour. They feel guilty about their privileges and yet enjoy them so much that they become indifferent to almost everything and everyone around them.

Most of Stockwell's political points are made skillfully, too, although his portrayal of the South African antihero as the embodiment of all evil in the world is a bit heavy handed. For the nonaficionado, there may be a little too much chess detail; but the denouement between Natalie Wilson and Zyl Van Genoop, a public chess match at the *Cercle Sportif* in Bujumbura, is exquisite and hilarious. Both it and the hand-to-hand combat between Jerry Lineman, another American oil company representative, and the Zairian Crocodile in Lineman's living room seem to be written for the movies.

To be sure, this novel is not without its flaws—for some readers, things will feel too neatly wrapped up at the end, too predictably bittersweet—but it is an agreeable novelty to be able to read about life in Africa without feeling that one is being invited to mock it.

SANFORD J. UNGAR

Sanford J. Ungar, host of "All Things Considered" on National Public Radio, has lived in Africa. He is at work on a book about Africa and Americans.

The Women of Brewster Place by Gloria Naylor

(Viking, 192 pp., $13.95)

Like any ghetto, Brewster Place has its horrors and its desperate charms. A dead-end street, cut off from the city's main arteries by a brick wall, this neighborhood is inhabited by decaying apartment buildings, children who "bloom in colorful shorts and tops plastered against gold, ebony, and nut-brown arms and legs," and women who "pin their dreams to wet laundry hung out to dry." There are men who live here too, of course. They visit their women like nightmares, leaving behind them babies and bile. But Gloria Naylor's women, much like those of Toni Morrison and Alice Walker, are daunting even in desolation. Most of them find that through laughter and companionship they can make themselves virtually impregnable.

The Women of Brewster Place is subtitled "a novel in seven stories," and Naylor has blended the lives of these distinctive characters just as fluidly as the

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women do in their long kitchen talks, "so that what lay behind one and ahead of the other became indistinguishable." Their personal histories share a common theme: violence and abuse at the hands of men. Adoring fathers beat their young daughters senseless and turn them out of the house when they get pregnant; lovers fracture their jaws when they burn a pot of rice; sons mysteriously change from affectionate boys to juvenile delinquents who pick them clean of money and love. But these women are astoundingly resilient. The novel's standard-bearer, Mattie Michael, holds together the lives of the others through strength of will, and it is Naylor's knowing characterization of Mattie that makes *The Women of Brewster Place* more than a patchwork of stories about seven women. Mattie is described in her old age as someone who "chose her words with the grinding precision of a diamond cutter's drill." The same can be said of Gloria Naylor, who has written a polished story about how individuals adapt when their aspirations for better lives are met repeatedly with ridicule and random brutality.

It won't come as a surprise to readers of contemporary fiction by black women that Gloria Naylor has few kind words to waste on members of the other sex. Yet *The Women of Brewster Place*, like Alice Walker's extraordinary *The Color Purple*, a new epistolary novel about marital love and hate, love among women, and love of God—and unlike much current fiction by privileged white feminists—is not simply a self-indulgent celebration of female solidarity. Naylor and Walker write with equal lucidity about the cruelty that poverty breeds and the ways in which people achieve redemption. Nor is there a wariness about traditional women's roles. *The Women of Brewster Place* is a novel about motherhood, a concept embraced by Naylor's women, each of whom is a surrogate child or mother to the next.

DESPITE the simple elegance of Naylor's prose, there is a risk that the accumulation of horrific experiences may deaden some readers' senses before the novel builds to its devastating climax. Yet the spirit with which these women cope is, finally, more powerful than the circumstances of their lives. When the granddaughter of one of Mattie's closest friends wills her own death after her baby dies and her lover abandons her, Mattie surges into Luciela Louise's sick room:

> 'No! No! No!' Like a black Brahman cow, desperate to protect her young, she . . . approached the bed with her lips clamped shut in such force that the muscles in her jaw and the back of her neck began to ache.
>
> She sat on the edge of the bed and enfolded the tissue-thin body in her huge ebony arms. And she rocked. Ciel's body was so hot it burned Mattie when she first touched her, but she held on and rocked. Back and forth, back and forth—she had Ciel so tightly she could feel her young breasts flatten against the buttons of her dress. The black mammoth gripped so firmly that the slightest increase of pressure would have cracked the girl's spine. But she rocked.

DOROTHY WICKENDEN

Paddy's Lament: Ireland 1846 to 1857 by Thomas Gallagher

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 352 pp., $14.95)

This is a curiously difficult book to evaluate. Although based on wide reading and much original research, it can hardly be called history in any academic sense. At the same time, it is distinctly more than journalism and makes a contribution of a kind to new knowledge. Part of the problem in judging it arises from Thomas Gallagher's tendency to use his sources in a somewhat haphazard way and without adequate dating; thus descriptions of Ireland *before* the Famine are sometimes deployed in such a way as to lead an unwary reader to believe that they are descriptions of Ireland *during* the Famine. More serious than this is his habit of giving us conversations or accounts of episodes that can at best be only vaguely documented, at worst not at all. This makes it hard to be sure that whenever Mr. Gallagher is at his most vivid—and he can be very vivid—he is not in fact indulging in a little improvisation.

The book is divided into four sections—"The Doomed Country," "The Escape," "The Voyage," and "Through the Golden Door"—which deal, respectively, with the Irish Famine of the 1840s, the pressure to emigrate, the horrors of the Atlantic crossing, and the reception of the emigrants in the New World. Only the first two of these sections take a panoramic view of the virtual collapse of Irish society at that time and these, as it happens, are the weakest parts of the book.

THE TRAGIC history of the Famine has been told many times, and although Mr. Gallagher's aim is evidently to shock us, he does not tell us anything particularly new. His account will leave anyone who knows even a little about the subject distinctly unsatisfied. It is in fact no longer sufficient to make our flesh creep. We need to be told more about causes and effects, to be given more rigorous analysis, to be assured that the writer knows more than this one apparently does about the recent work that has been done on modern Irish economic history. Too few of the names that ought to come up in any informed discussion of the Famine occur in his bibliography, and Mr. Gallagher's grasp of the complexities, of Irish land tenure and of nineteenth-century British administration alike, leaves a great deal to be desired. On the other hand, his account of the voyage across the Atlantic is brilliantly done. By narrowing his focus to the adventures of a single ship, he evokes the miseries and endurance of the Irish emigrants more effectively than if he had tried to view the phenomenon of emigration in its massive entirety. His concluding section, which is largely an account of New York in 1847, though really a bravura description of the city for its own sake, contains some lively social comment.

The book is readable throughout, but it left me deeply disturbed about its underlying purpose. Its ominous subtitle, "Prelude to hatred," sets the tone for much that follows. In his prologue, after explaining the traumatic effect his researches had upon him, Mr. Gallagher says this:

> And so I determined to bring the evidence into the glaring light as best I could. I would speak for the victim, comment on his behalf, and describe the suffering he endured. I would try to avoid the role of propagandist and cling to the record. Let the eyewitness reports and corroborated facts and figures speak for themselves, and if they amount to an indictment, so be it. In the light of what my research uncovered, I could do no less.

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This is no doubt a worthy ambition, but it is vain for Mr. Gallagher to claim that his book is not propagandist. Whether consciously or not, it is anti-British propaganda of a familiar kind, suffused by that classical Irish-American hatred which he sets out to explain and may in fact end by aggravating. This is not to say that the record is not a grim one nor that there is much to be said in blame and condemnation. But what matters—especially now—is the *tone* in which blame and condemnation are uttered. Mr. Gallagher seems vess interested in understanding than in judging, and nothing in his book is more revealing than the way in which he brushes aside (apart from its medical evidence) the most distinguished modern work in this field, *The Great Famine*, edited by R. Dudley Edwards and T. Desmond Williams. That book set a new standard in the cool and objective treatment of the Famine, viewing it as a British predicament as well as an Irish tragedy. But this will not do for Mr. Gallagher, who ends his study by invoking the ghost of the "Paddy" of the nineteenth century, a ghost that haunts "not only Irish memory, but also the halls and chambers of Westminster Palace, where Parliament tried for so long, without success, to do him in."

THIS IS, of course, the genocidal argument that reputable historians do not accept. Altogether apart from its distortion of events, that theory has the baneful effect of concentrating attention on the Famine and ignoring everything that has happened since then to create an entirely different Ireland. It is an Ireland that has come to realize that its problems and frustrations cannot be blamed solely on the British connection, but are also the product of internal divisions between Irishmen themselves, divisions that can only be ended by a serious commitment to reconciliation which, alas, is not yet in sight. Fanning the flames of Irish-American hatred was never a very constructive approach to the Irish question. At the present time it is recognized by most Irishmen to be exactly what is not needed.

F. S. L. LYONS

F. S. L. Lyons, professor of history at the University of Dublin, is the author of *Culture and Anarchy in Ireland, 1819-1939* (Oxford University Press).

TRB, *from page 4*

tempt to fence off Soviet Russia, has a third manifestation: a belief that he can somehow turn back federal functions to the states and create a smaller central government. Maybe. Jimmy Carter had the same fond hope, though he did not get very far with it. No doubt the central government has its problems and seems overpowering. Recently we have picked candidates who ran against the government and became President in order to show how bureaucratic the whole system is. Last week Reagan went back to his theme: "I had campaigned on the belief that government costs should be reduced and that the percentage of the people's earnings taken by the government in taxes should also be reduced." Well, fine. It is a universal hope.

Should we abolish old-age pensions? Social Security? Welfare? Reagan applies a specific figure to it; in 1980 he told voters his goal was to reduce the share of gross national product taken by the government in taxes to "20.5 percent." (It's a bit higher now.) Maybe he can do it.

But big corporations get bigger. The urge to merge seems inexorable. *Fortune* magazine has just published its latest list of the top 500 corporations. Senator Kennedy says the top 500 controlled 65 percent of all manufacturing and mining assets in 1955; 73 percent in 1965; and "over 80 percent" more recently.

Can Reagan control the budget while building up the Pentagon and thumbing his nose at Moscow? Take the budget dollar: approximately 48 cents presently goes to welfare, Social Security, and similar benefits. Then 25 cents more goes to the Pentagon. Another 10 cents pays interest on the national debt (approaching a trillion dollars). And that leaves only 17 cents for everything else! The theoretical budget is already in deficit when three costs alone are met —welfare entitlements, military, and interest.

With figures like these, there is all the more reason, of course, for thrift in government. But President Reagan has also found that you can't make ends meet with supply-side mirrors. (If supporters wait around a bit they will find that you can't do it either with a new amendment to the Constitution requiring a balanced budget.) Wall Street cheers at signs that reality is breaking in. And the education of Ronald Reagan continues.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

ments and some of the bans. Judging, however, from accounts of the fighting in Tyre and Sidon, the capture of those cities was a good example of proportionate warfare. In Israel late in June, I spoke with soldiers, members of Peace Now opposed to the war, who insisted that the Israeli Army had fought carefully in the south and accepted risks to its own men in order to reduce civilian casualties. Nor is it irrelevant that the PLO hides behind the civilian population; this fact cannot justify random or wholesale attacks upon civilians or the terror bombing of cities, but it does justify military operations in which civilians are put at risk—and the responsibility for the risks lies with the PLO. (I made a similar argument in the case of Vietnam: see my *Just and Unjust Wars*, pages 192-193.) Professor Hoffmann's letter is uncharacteristically reductionist: not an example of moral analysis but of moralizing, an activity toward which he has always maintained a model impatience.

Finally, to talk of proportionality is to accept that some number of civilian losses can be justified. It is not my kind of talk, but since Professor Hoffmann believes in it, he ought to tell us, roughly, what number he has in mind. Actual casualty figures have been so much lower than the figures reported out of Beirut that he might find, once the fighting is over, that he had justified the Israeli operation. But perhaps he believes that no casualties can be justified, in which case he is not making a proportionality argument at all but an argument against any Israeli attack. Then he has to argue (what I am sure he doesn't believe) that the Palestine Liberation Organization, having chosen the path of "armed struggle," deserved to escape the consequences of its choice.

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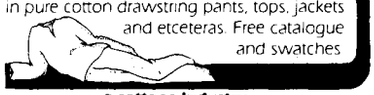

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LOS ANGELES DIARIST

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THERE ARE REALLY two papers in Los Angeles. The *Times* is by far the better and by far the richer, more widely distributed in the vast urban sprawl stretching from just north of Mexico to just south of San Francisco. The West Coast *Times* sells more than a million copies a day. It would like to be a national newspaper, and with its new effort to get itself read in Washington it may get its wish. At America's best newsstand, "Out of Town" in Cambridge, Massachusetts, it is bought daily by those serious students of our society who know that the deeper history of the United States is not being made in Washington. Los Angeles is to the second half—or fourth quarter—of twentieth-century America what New York was to the first. (It is also another test of the multiethnic, multiracial dream, with lesser, which is to say more realistic, expectations.) But *Times* people are not disdainful of the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, and they shouldn't be. Edited out of a decaying Mexican rococo fantasy evoking Hearst's San Simeon (and designed by the same architect), but with a shabby old loft interior, the second paper is struggling toward a distinct identity without forfeiting a claim to seriousness to the front-runner. It is a healthy situation all around.

I'M IN L.A. to talk to journalists about journalism, specifically about the way our larger opinion combines have handled the events in Lebanon. Their little secret is that much of their reportage has been inconsistent with the simple facts and oblivious to the deeper contextual realities. Some of the journalists posted in that country saw themselves as posted to the PLO. What happened to them is what often happens to ambassadors: they begin to represent the interests of those with whom they are sent to deal. Then there are the visiting stars, armed with attitudes more weighty than their knowledge. John Chancellor's reports from the Middle East, alas, were another case of Gullible's Travels. I talked about much of this in Los Angeles, on radio talk shows and local TV news programs, in some speeches (including a couple at UCLA), and with the editorial boards of the two papers. This is a miniature, one-stop version of an author's tour. The people who arrange these things treat their charges as one treats a rented car. They gas you up and drive you hard, constrained only by the obligation to get you back to the airport in one piece.

ORDINARILY, Hollywood is not a reading town, not even of scripts. What it does peruse are "treatments," snappy shorthands for some idea or story, the first station on the long, uncertain, and usually sidetracked road to the camera. One theme Hollywood seldom takes up is its own routine and casual corruption. A recent instance of this habitual venality is the subject of a gripping new book, *Indecent Exposure*, by David McClintock (Morrow), a former reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*, and it actually has the locals reading and talking about what they read. At poolside in the Beverly Hills Hotel, this town's justly fabled inn, I overheard a starlet musing about David Begelman, the Columbia Pictures executive whose forging of company checks, made out to others but which he'd then cash, provoked the scandal. "Begelman was stupid to forge a check to Cliff Robertson," said the starlet. "Cliff is so loaded that he was sure to get outraged once he found out." Behind these words lurks a hoary myth of our culture, that the wealthy can be counted on to be honest. It's not so, and this book proves it. More disgusting even than Begelman, who scraped by in Hollywood by supplementing his ample income with an unearned ten grand here, an odd five grand there, were the Wall Street pilot fish who owned Columbia Pictures. They didn't mind being robbed of relatively trivial sums as long as the thief in their midst kept the really big money rolling in, which is what, for a time, Begelman did.

THE DRAMATIS PERSONAE of *Indecent Exposure* is largely Jewish, and somehow this awkward fact provoked some overcompensating talk about why Israeli soldiers don't loot much, which they don't, at least compared to how much other soldiers do. One Zionist stalwart protested that "they don't loot at all." "I don't mean to rob you of your illusions," retorted another stalwart in a position to know, "but in the battle for Jerusalem a comrade of mine, a member of my kibbutz, did loot and he spent a month in jail for it. He is now a professor at Tel Aviv University. He looted a complete set of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. A shrewd looter! It was the eleventh edition he took, the best yet."

M.P.

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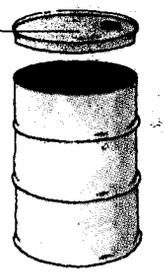
"Almost anything you can make out of anything, you can make with less energy from plastics."

"From houses to toothbrushes, plastics can do almost anything."

"It's no news that plastics are versatile," says Frank Barborek, Plastics Development Manager at Gulf Oil Chemicals Company. "Even more important perhaps is that plastics are remarkably energy-efficient.



"Petrochemicals use only about 6% of America's crude oil supply, and it's an energy bargain."

"For instance, it takes less energy to make plastic bags instead of paper bags; plastic bottles instead of glass bottles; plastic cans instead of steel cans; plastic auto hoods and trunk lids instead of aluminum.

"Many plastics are lighter than the materials they replace, so they take less energy to ship and handle. And plastic parts can make cars dramatically more fuel-efficient: there's over 230 pounds of plastic in the average late-model car, and each pound of plastic can replace up to six pounds of steel. And of course plastics don't rust.

"Most plastics are based on chemicals from petroleum; and one reason why Gulf is committed to developing other fuel sources, such as tar sands and oil shale, is to maintain a steady supply of petrochemicals for plastics.

"Only about 6% of America's crude oil supply goes into petrochemicals, and the crude oil we turn into energy-efficient plastics helps make the rest of each barrel of oil go farther. That's more energy for tomorrow."

Gulf

Gulf people: energy for tomorrow.

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